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March
1923

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Volume 55 Number 1

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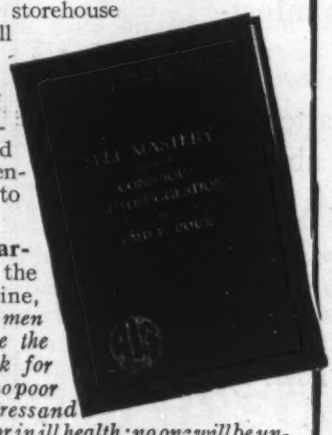

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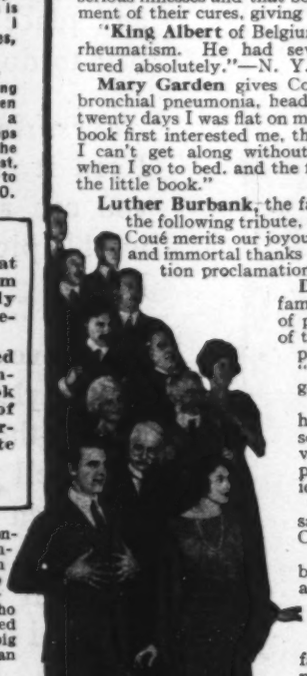

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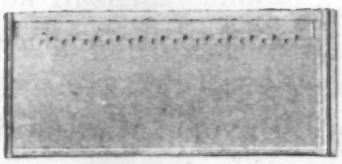

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JIM MAITLAND *by* "Sapper" (Major H. C. McNeile), author of "Bulldog Drummond"

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VICTOR J. BENDER, MASTER ROGUE *by* Lieutenant X

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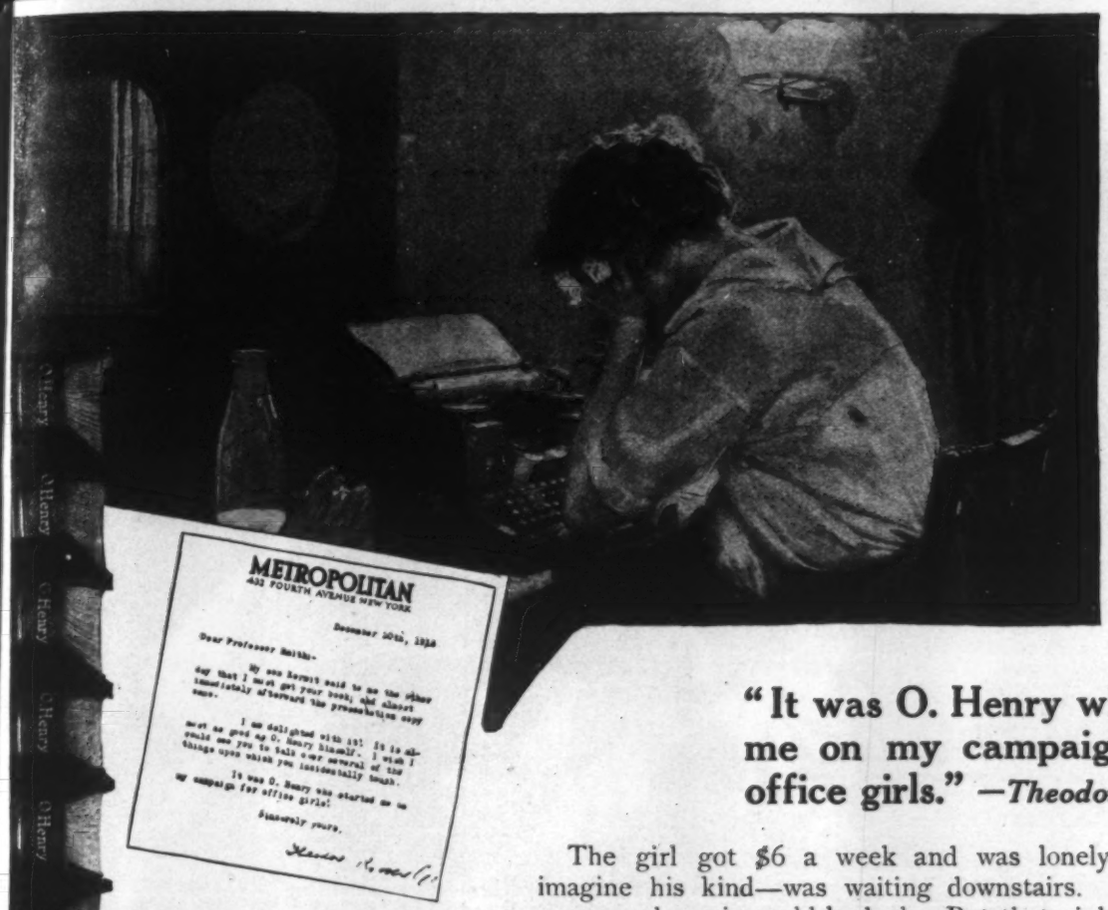
RED JUSTICE *by* Sergey Kobyakov

A man who knows tells how the Russian Soviet administers justice.

In addition to these features, April McClure's will contain many other stories and articles of unusual interest



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It was O. Henry who started me on my campaign for office girls!

Sincerely yours,

Theodore Roosevelt

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Drawing by Kyohei Inukai to illustrate "Children of Hagar"

Here was plain murder—no other word could cover it: and Billy Prothero, for the first time in his life, looked through a red and bloody mist

VOLUME 55
No. 1

McCLURE'S MAGAZINE
S. S. McCLURE, *Editor*

MARCH
1923

Romance Keeps Step with the Changing Times in This Absorbing Story of a New Breed of Moonshiners—

Children of Hagar

By Neil Gray

Illustrations by Kyohei Inukai

BILLY PROTHERO used to see the Mackays long before he came to know them—at the Westchester place where his uncle, John Prothero, spent a week-end now and then. Billy was taken there in May, and stayed till September or October. Next door were the Mackays. He caught glimpses of the boys, Allan and Angus and Donald, older than he as well as bigger; of Janet, a tomboy always, with flying red hair and long legs. Billy, catching glimpses of their romps and fights through a privet hedge, would roll over on the grass and sink his nails into his palms in sick and helpless longing.

"Play with them, indeed!"—thus nurse or maid. "And what play could they be having with one like you, Master Billy?"

He knew it. But some frolic brought them into the Prothero grounds, and after that he played with them sometimes—though they had small patience with his weakness, his pipe-stem arms and legs, his inability to climb a tree or leap a brook.

The code that bids a child accept any fate rather than tell on another was utterly beyond Billy. Worse—there came a time when summary court was held upon a broken window, and he lied—pointed to Angus as the culprit when he himself had done the mischief. Janet slapped his face for that. He went home with the red marks of her fingers on his cheeks and a new kind of shame in his heart.

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E-L-T

FROM the beginning life had had a queer way with Billy Prothero. It flung him high, dragged him low, too, and made him pay dear enough for what he got from it. It was long before he had much cause to thank it; least of all could he be grateful for the way it dealt with him when Janet Mackay was in question. She saw him at his worst always. There seemed to be a kind of fate, malign and ugly, about that.

How he had lived through his first hard years it would be hard to say. His mother could not help him: she died just as his struggle was beginning. His father outlived her only a little while. Nurses, doctors, servants saw him through. They had all the incentive to care for him that money, plentifully supplied, could give. John Prothero, the boy's uncle, was a rich man, and not the kind to shirk responsibility.

Yet a bachelor, a man of great affairs, could not be expected to concern himself much with a sickly baby that grew somehow, through illness after illness, into a frail and puny boy. John Prothero worked hard—played hard, too. He measured boys by the memories of his own boyhood; his nephew fell short indeed of matching that.

Here was a boy who literally could not run and leap and play, who loved to lie and read through the glasses they had to give him early. He loved adventure, longed for it, but he had to take it vicariously through book and picture. His childhood was one long series of illnesses, of minor operations, of pain. He came to be more afraid of being hurt than of anything else in life—and with good reason.

His mind, alert and active, outran his body's growth. His imagination fed upon legends, whispered stories, tales that servants told. Think what you please of him; judge him as you like. He was a coward, a tale-bearer, consistently a shunner of punishment at any cost. Honor, as children know it, was a strange thing to him.

ANOTHER summer came; and, while he remembered, the Mackays had forgotten, and played with him again. But again he did one of the things that are not done. Janet had no blow this time, though. Shortly afterward John Prothero sold the Westchester

place and bought his Wassahackie estate; and Billy, after the way of children, heard and saw nothing more of his friends.

It had been Janet, after all, who meant the most to him, not the boys. Angus and Donald frankly scorned him; Allan was too big to be bothered with him. And though he angered Janet, and her quick temper flashed too often when she was with him, still she mothered him a little, as girls will a sickly boy.

WASSAHACKIE saw little of Billy Prothero. He had more bouts with illness—fell into the hands of specialists. They pulled him through, however, and in the end he went to college, with strength enough to last him his four years. There he came into touch again with the Mackays. Angus turned up a class ahead of Billy, and saw no reason—when with difficulty he remembered his childhood acquaintance—to revise his contemptuous opinion of Billy Prothero.

College teams were not for Billy, of course, though he tried hard to strengthen his body: he played tennis badly, and golf fairly well. As a student he was almost brilliant; but he was too indifferent to subjects he did not like to attain high honors.

Angus, no squire of dames, brought Janet down for dances, so Billy came upon her again. But he had damned himself by that time—written things in the college paper that stamped him as an outsider; declined election, too, to a club his name had opened to him, with some raw talk of democracy and such like nonsense.

He made a poor showing in that fight, lacking the real fanatic's zeal that might have won respect at least, even from Angus. The truth was, and in his heart he knew it, that he had snatched at a chance to emerge—to distinguish himself. Janet saw through to the truth, and told him so, and in the telling slapped his face again—metaphorically, of course. The episode clouded his senior year and made him glad when commencement came. Janet was down,—with some other girl's brother to play host that time,—but she merely nodded to Billy.

Had she taken the trouble to talk with him, she would have found him changed. Janet Mackay probably did more than any one else to show Billy Prothero the use of his own feet to stand upon. It was Janet's influence that offset the bad environment of his childhood. She couldn't know that; didn't think about him at all, he supposed. He had a picture of her that he had cut from a Sunday supplement—one of a page of photographs of débutantes. He wanted desperately to see her, to know her as he could guess plenty of men did. He had bad times, moments of fierce jealousy when he caught a glimpse of her laughing and smiling as she talked with other men.

AFTER college John Prothero supposed his nephew ready for work. Plans had been made: he was to be schooled in the ways of John Prothero's affairs. Not much above the middle height, and slender, Billy was stronger than he looked. He had outgrown ill health and frailty. But he had no intention of following the business career that had been mapped out for him. He met his uncle's matter-of-course question as to when he would be ready to come downtown with the news that he had found a job for himself—a place on a New York paper.

Vague ambitions were stirring in Billy Prothero just then. He wanted to write—something. He had nothing to say, and sense enough to know it. He turned to newspaper work as more likely to supply that deficiency than anything else. He declined an allowance, though he agreed to live in the New York house. There wasn't much of a row, in the end.

As a reporter Billy Prothero made good. He learned his job slowly, had his share of good assignments, and did a good deal in the way of finding himself. He wrote some pleasant verse, and sold it; one or two things appeared in obscure monthlies. Creatively, he decided, he was going to be a minor poet, and he wasn't thrilled by the idea. He was convinced that if he had leisure for the necessary research he could do some historical writing of real interest and value. Then something happened that drove this idea from his mind—the breaking of the frightful scandal that brought John Mackay, Janet's father, crashing from his financial pinnacle.

THE story was sordid enough, and ugly enough, as it appeared. What couldn't be printed, but was known to Billy Prothero, as to every other newspaper man who worked on the case, was uglier still. The truth was that there had been inflation, juggling of a sort, technical violations of banking laws. Plenty of other banks had done what Mackay's had done; plenty of men were as much responsible as he. But it was upon his bank that a run happened to come; it was he who was technically liable, he who was arrested, indicted, rushed to trial by prosecuting authorities eager to stem the tide of popular indignation.

Billy Prothero covered the story for his paper. He had to sit in the court-room with his fellows, and watch Janet's white face as she sat, with her eyes moving from her father, old and broken, to quiet, cynical lawyers, to witnesses who themselves were in deadly fear, to the bored judge and the bewildered jurors.

From the first it was plain that John Mackay was to be thrown to the wolves to save the rest. He struggled, but had no chance. His lawyers knew it; Billy Prothero knew it.

Billy challenged John Prothero sharply, late one night—accused him, point-blank, of treachery and cowardice.

"You could tell the truth," he said.

"I couldn't save Mackay if I did," said John Prothero—truthfully enough.

"If you all worked together—admitted that he did no more than a lot of others—"

"If we did that we'd have a dozen banks on the rocks within a day." John Prothero shook his head. "No—I'm sorry. He's what you call the goat, I believe. He broke the commandment there's no fooling with—'Thou shall not be found out!'"

Billy persisted. Argument degenerated into quarreling, and both grew angry. And Billy, upon an impulse, moved out of his uncle's house next day, and found rooms downtown.

He heard the court-room verdict given—saw Janet's face go dead white and then fill with a rush of angry crimson; had to watch her, too, as, with head held high, she listened to the platitudinous admonitions of the judge pronouncing sentence while an old man stood before him, tremulous, incredulous.

With that story he did what he could. He wrote in a white heat of anger that shone through the stark facts he chronicled. John Mackay was down: the hungry wolves had their sop. Billy's city editor was

"Look here," she said. "I've got to tell you! That night—I didn't understand—I didn't know—"

prepared to deal with John Mackay now in terms of what city desks call human interest. He looked through the story, nodded approvingly before he added it to the pile of early stuff for the night desk, and called for Billy.

"Good story," he said. "They sure handed the old boy a raw deal. There's another end, though. Better go up to the house and try and get something from the family. They're close, but they might talk —now. Every sob sister in town's had a shot at the daughter. Hard on her. This'll queer the young ones for a while."

Billy stared. Chance, rather than any management, had saved him from any contact with the Mackays. In the division of work that always occurs when a big story is to be covered in New York, other men had drawn the house and the family.

"I'd rather—" he began. Then he bit his lip and stopped. It was Janet herself who had taught him, long ago, not to shirk things. And, anyway, this was the kind of assignment that never panned out. He could go through the motions; there wasn't one foggy chance in a million that the Mackay door would open to any reporter that night. "All right, boss," he said.

Except in court, he hadn't seen Janet for three years and more. The boys had been scattered until this disaster brought them home. Angus, in London, had managed a branch house; Donald had been with his father; Allan had gone into the army.

An impulse to be done with the business quickly took Billy uptown before dinner. Chance began to play tricks with him just then. Had he waited, he would have gone with men from other papers; as it was, he was ahead of them. He rang the bell of a darkened house. An old man-servant, the picture of gloom, opened to him.

"If I could see Mr. Allan Mackay—or any of the family—" Billy began.

"May I have a card, sir?"

"Just say Mr. Prothero of the—"

"My orders are, I must have a card, sir."

The old fellow was nearly beside himself; plainly, the blow had been a hard one for him. Billy laughed nervously, got out a card. Just here chance played its second trick; for it happened, although he didn't notice it, that his cards were mixed, and the one that was carried off was engraved with his name alone and had nothing to say of his paper.

He waited in the hall.

"Billy—oh, Billy Prothero—"

He heard Janet's voice; got up, stumbling a little, and saw her coming down the stairs, both hands outstretched. Her eyes were shining; and her voice—it made him think of thick, sweet cream, of honey dripping from the comb. And it seemed to him, as he took a slow step to meet her, that this was worse than anything that had ever happened to him. He took the hands she held out to him. For the first time since they had grown up, she was all warmth and friendliness.

"Billy—" she said. "You're the first—you're the only one who's come to us."

He could see the tears in her eyes. And what he said, what he did, was what, long ago, she had taught him he must do.

"Janet!" he said. "Look here. I—I'd have come like a shot if I'd dreamed you'd want to see me. But—well—I'm here because my paper sent me to see if you—if any of you—had anything to say. I—"

He could see the way she stiffened as she stared at him. She drew back, took a step backward, away from him.

"You—you cad!" she said. And then she caught herself. Her voice was very low: "Will you go, please?"

Just a moment he hesitated, with explanations, excuses stumbling on his lips. Then he turned and went out. He wrote a dozen letters to her that night—tore each through as it was finished.

So again, it seemed, there was an end, for him, of the Mackays—and that meant an end of Janet; as it had meant her, and her only, in his childhood, long before.

THERE was little enough for him to hear of them after that. They simply disappeared, dropped out of sight. Their name was in the news again a few months later, when John Mackay died in a prison hospital. But what had become of his children no one seemed to know. Their friends, he supposed, kept in touch with them; but, even had he known how to go about it, he could not have spied on her and tried to find her.

There began then for him a time that later he could look back upon as just an interlude. He became half-way reconciled with his uncle; saw him from time to time, dined in the big house uptown, and spent a week-end or two at Wassahackie. But he kept his own rooms. He was glad when his paper sent him to London.

Followed a lonely time for him, a period of emotional isolation virtually complete. The thought of Janet Mackay stayed with him: she stood between him and interest in any other woman. He had bad hours, hours of an intolerable longing for the sight of her and the sound of her voice.

But where she was concerned he was without hope. He knew that she despised him; must dislike him too, if she thought of him at all; could have no kind of conception of the place she had in his life. It was more than love, that feeling that he had for her. She was bound up with his ideals. She had driven him in all his struggles toward faith and decency and honor—the things his twisted, misshapen childhood had kept him from learning in the simple, normal ways.

He came upon that old picture he had of her, when he was clearing out his rooms before he sailed for England. He held it to the fire, then drew it back, with an odd feeling that he had come near to burning something more than an old picture.

AMERICA'S entrance into the war ended his interlude. He tried to get into some active service, but failed in every examination he had to take. He found work to do, work that he might have taken a legitimate pride in, though he did not. He felt himself an outsider, just as he had in college; but he knew better now than to struggle. It was all a part of a game he had to play, he decided—a game scarcely worth the trouble.

With the war's end he faced the need of taking up the old grind again, and shrank from it. More than ever, now, he wanted leisure for the work he knew he could do. And abruptly life changed its way with him—calling death to its aid to do it. For John Prothero died one night in his sleep, very quietly and peacefully, with no warning at all.

Shocked Billy was: grieved, quite certainly, he was not—though he was touched when he learned of John Prothero's will, and especially when he read a letter that had been left for him. Everything of his uncle's had been given to him.

Thus he suddenly found himself a very rich man. The New York and Wassahackie houses were his; also, property so varied that it made him dizzy merely to read lists and statements; an income mounting close to seven figures. Almost at once, in his mind, his inheritance came down to just two things he could appraise as real—the Wassahackie place and the leisure he had dreamed of and longed for.

He could have neither, really, for a time. There was much for him to do with lawyers, brokers, agents of all kinds. He was resolute about some things against all advice—he was determined not to let his property own him. Some holdings he sacrificed ruthlessly; he would commit himself to nothing in the way of management. He meant to live at Wassahackie all the year round, and ordered the New York house to be sold forthwith. He kept his rooms, and for a long time he paid for a day at Wassahackie with a week in town. Even so, a new life began to shape itself for him.

You come to Wassahackie by a hundred miles of riding along roads as smooth as city walks: bear west, then north, then west again from New York. The State road brings you to the valley of the Ruyterskill, which old Jan Ruyter found and cleared and tilled and held under the patent of Peter Stuyvesant, governor of New Amsterdam. The Wassahackie range is the valley's southern wall—a great preserve,

grown up around the Lakeside Club, dotted with pleasant houses, where people spend their summers and, since they have learned the fun of skees and snowshoes and toboggan slides, some of their winters too.

From the houses on the ridge, when autumn winds have stripped the trees of leaves, you may look down upon the valley and see Jan Ruyter's stead split up by walls and rough stone fences into a score of holdings. The kill runs through it like a silver thread, watering rich fields and orchards and lush meadows.

In the valley live good, solid folk who find in their Wassahackie neighbors generous customers for what they have to sell. Impressed they are not; there is something about American air that makes those who breathe it a little intolerant of lodge gates and private roads that run for many miles, and such survivals of baronial state.

And yet, you can not altogether blame the Wassahackie colonists. Billy Prothero, who was far from sharing all their views, did not. There is still game in those woods: trout fill the streams that trickle down the slope to swell the Ruyterskill. And lodge gates kept out tourists who would have brought their lunch in baskets and left their litter where they chose.

A March Night

By Letta Eulalia Thomas

Do you know the sound and the sweep and the swirl
Of the wind through the wild March sky,
When the far stars flame and the snowflakes whirl
And the spirit of spring flits by
With a whispered word to the swaying trees
Of the heat to follow the cold,
Of the days to come, when the silver rain
Will shine on the cowslip's gold?
Do you know the feel of the wild, sweet call
When you open your heart and soul
To the thrill and lift and throb of life—
The full, strong life of the whole?

IT seemed to Billy Prothero, with surrogates and lawyers satisfied at last, that life's queer way with him had turned to his advantage in the end. It had played its tricks upon him: here was ample and satisfying atonement. He liked his neighbors well enough. Their ways were not his ways, but there was room enough for him and them, for all that. His land was sanctuary for all wild things: once that was understood, there was no trouble. They might wonder at his horror of all killing, of gun and rod and trap and snare. But his land was his; that was an end of that!

They might wonder, too, at a young man, with such an opportunity as his, who chose to withdraw himself from business and go around the country hunting old letters, dog-eared books, the oldest records in the musty files of county seats, a young man who didn't dance or amuse himself in any fashion orthodox and customary. But, again, that was his own affair, and if he chose to keep to himself he might, and welcome. Mothers there were, no doubt, with marriageable daughters, who sighed a little. But what was to be done?

So he found peace and settled down to work. Some men might have been lonely: he was not. He found companions in those old records that came to life for him; he had his horses and his dogs, and the men about his place. Sometimes friends came to visit him. He ran down to the city from time to time.

The county as a whole thought more of him—knew more of him, for that matter—than his Wassahackie neighbors did. Even before he could vote from his new home, he took part in a reform campaign, helping to finance it, and did more, probably, than any one else to loosen the grip of a bi-partizan machine on the district attorney's office. A by-product of that fight was an appointment—purely honorary, as he supposed—as deputy sheriff. He accepted it, with no thought that life was at its tricks with him again.

And yet, almost at once he began to see where that was bound to lead him. There was trouble in the valley—trouble that climbed upward from it, rather. Here was a paradox. In the days before prohibition and the Volstead Act the town of Ruyterskill had been dry by its own option. Live within its limits, and you might have what liquor you pleased, of course in your own home. But you would find no cross-roads saloon, no lurking road-house. Wastrels, those who might have been village drunkards, had to go afield for what they wanted, nursing aching heads and carrying repentance with them, as a rule, when they came home again. But Billy Prothero was hearing tales now of liquor, made in the valley, that did its work in inciting many a petty crime. With such liquid courage, poachers grew bold. Drunken fellows showed themselves abroad at night, so that, even in the park, it was not well for women to go alone after dark.

THE tales came to a single head. All of the Ruyterskill knew where that liquor came from, at which farm wine and home-brewed beer, whisky and applejack were to be had in barter or in place of wages for work done. Here was an open mocking of the law. And yet, what was so widely known could not, it seemed, be proved.

The thing came home to Billy Prothero. He found a fuddled boy at a snare, one day, lifting a rabbit from it. He was angry when somebody asked him why he had let the culprit go.

"Arrest him?" he said. "It would be like cutting off the heads of weeds! You have to root out burdock, don't you? We've got to stop this moonshining—not just arrest the poor fools it poisons."

His neighbors fought a little shy of talk like that. Perhaps they were conscious of the glass walls of their own houses in these days of prohibition. Prothero held no hot brief for prohibition, either, when it came to that; but, as he saw it, law was law!

"And who are these Mackays," he asked, "to be above the law?"

He even had the name, you see! But how should he know that he was better fitted to answer his own question than any who heard him ask it—how could he guess that farmers of that name,—not so uncommon, when you think of it,—who dwelt within a stone's-pitch of his own house, were those same Mackays he had known long ago?

The name struck on the chord of his memories of Janet—and yet, he never guessed the truth, nor dreamed of it. And yet his thoughts, his memories of her, revived and freshened by that echoing name, did much to anger him and spur him on. The thought of her gone, vanished from his life, made ashes of the comfort that he tasted now. She might be married, dead even, and he know nothing.

Had he asked his question in the valley, he must have hit upon some clue, at least, to lead him to the truth and warn him of the new trick that life was playing on him. For in the valley, of course, folk knew that the Mackays, three brothers and a sister, had bought the Ruyter farm before the war. Beyond that, however, even the valley folk knew little.

THE Mackays were good neighbors—good farmers, too, now, whatever they had been in the beginning—given too much, perhaps, to books and theories, to improvements upon methods that had served well in the past. For the first year or so they had had a young man from Cornell to teach them. Still, facts were facts: acre for acre, the Mackay fields yielded more than any others in the valley.

Up in the park, though, Prothero's neighbors knew of the Mackays only that their milk was the best the valley offered.

"Good business men," some one said. "Gentlemen farmers, in a way, I fancy. About this moonshining—well, you hear this and that. Some say they're sore about the law—personal liberty, all that. The revenue chaps have given them up, I hear."

Billy Prothero, never guessing, never dreaming the truth, listened with tightened lips and eyes drawn close together, and then went off to the county seat to talk to Hargrave, now well launched upon his district-attorneyship and busy about the cleaning of certain Augean stables of his own.

"I've heard about them—yes," he said. "Don't see what I can do, though. If you can find that any officer's been derelict, I'll go after him. But I don't think it's that. It's the hardest kind of evidence to get—they're not just ordinary moonshiners, I gather. Still, get the evidence, and I'll prosecute like a shot. It's up to you as much as any one—you're a deputy sheriff. You can take that job as seriously as you please, you know."

His very memories of Janet, a vague and curious anger that her name should be involved in such a business, worked in Billy now. The code that she had taught him ruled him. You mustn't shirk; mustn't take refuge in technicalities; you must do what you ought, even though no one could hold you to the letter of a law. Eh, well, then—even if some one else were shirking, he needn't—couldn't.

Once his mind was made up, he set about to do his work thoroughly. He knew that he would have no help. The sheriff wished him well and washed his hands of him. His neighbors of the park weren't interested.

Billy went to New York and saw the head of a detective agency that Hargrave had recommended to him. One result of that was the quiet arrival at Wassahackie, some time later, of a house guest—Dineen, who in his time had worked among the moonshiners of the Blue Ridge. Two things were to be done: one, to confirm the common rumor and substitute known facts for gossip; the other, to fit such facts to the rules of law and evidence and turn them into proof.

Dineen worked slowly, but got what he wanted. The first stage of the investigation yielded all that Billy had foreseen.

"I've spotted their still," said Dineen, when he was ready to report. "It's in a spring-house dug out of the slope beyond the kill, behind the house. I've not seen it, but that's where it is, I know. I've tasted liquor of their making, too. It's good stuff—better than most moonshine. But I can't prove they made it—yet."

"What's next, then?"

"I'll need some help. We'll have two or three men up, and drop down on them some dark night. Two of us can get into that house somehow and see the still—and bring off some of what they've made for evidence."

Prothero frowned.

"It beats me, Dineen!" he said. "Here are decent men, from what I hear; yet they're hurting themselves as well as all the rest of us. Feeding this whisky to their hands—tempting every weakling about them—"

"I've seen it so before. There's something about whisky twists men's minds even before they drink it. Down in the mountains it was so. I've known men who led prayer meeting—and were sincere, at that!—who thought it was their duty to do as they liked with their own corn. And these folk—well, it seems they think this law's as bad as one would be that told a man what church he must go to, or some such thing. They don't sell—mind that. They'll trade or give. They take no profit from the liquor they make. And they believe they're in the right."

"Queer work!" Prothero shook his head. "One thing, before we go ahead. I'm going to warn them."

"Eh?" Dineen stared frankly. "Why that?"

"Well, if they're fanatics, as you say, why not give them a chance to quit? They're not just like the bootleggers you read of in New York—that's plain. No; I'll ride down to-morrow and have a talk with them."

"It's up to you," said Dineen; "but you'll get nowhere with them."

PROTHERO rode down next afternoon, and came to the farm when shadows lay long upon the ground. The old Dutch house was still; its door stood open. He tied his horse; sought bell or knocker vainly; shouted, then, a long hallo.

He waited on the porch. Tall hollyhocks swayed and nodded on their stems, larkspur ran wild around the house. He had no answer to his call, and stood, puzzled, half angry.

He heard the murmur of the kill, belated bees buzzing among the flowers, a chattering, scolding wren, the distant whinnying of a horse; and then, abruptly, a sound of whistling, and the fall of footsteps on the gravel path that ran around the house.

He saw a boyish figure, a girl in riding-breeches and a man's shirt open at her brown throat, with short red hair that curled around her head. Pursed lips were whistling still; gray eyes widened as they fell upon Billy's horse.

His lips framed her name; but she could not hear that soundless "Janet." Yet she turned and saw him staring at her. For a moment she was as still as he. And then a choked laugh came to him for greeting.

"Billy Prothero—is it you again?" she said. She went to him—held out her hand. He took it dumbly: he was not fit for speech as yet.

"Look here," she said. "I've got to tell you! That night—I didn't understand—I didn't know about you—anything! I've wanted to write and tell you I was sorry, but—"

He tried to speak, and stumbled on his words.

"You're the first one again!" she said. "The first who's come—the first who's found us! We—we hid, you see. Came here to be together and alone. But—but—I think I'm glad you've found us, Billy—"

"Janet—" he said. "Wait a minute. I didn't know—the name didn't mean you to me—"

"Oh, I don't care why you came!" she said. "I suppose—I've known you'd see us sooner or later. I knew you were up there. I've been glad about that. Things are easier for you now, aren't they?"

"No—wait—there's something I must tell you—"

"Billy Prothero—what on earth's the matter with you? Suppose you didn't know—" She caught her breath. "Oh, Billy—we've been so bitter and so hard, the four of us! Somehow, just seeing you makes me realize there's such a thing as time and what time does—"

He would have told her then what brought him; but he heard another footstep on the gravel path, and turned to see Angus coming—an Angus bigger even than the young giant of his memories.

"Hello!" he said, and stared.

"Don't you know Billy Prothero?" said Janet. "It's just happened so that he came. He didn't know. But let's—oh Angus, let's make him stay for dinner, now he's here!"

PROTHERO caught the hysterical note that was coming into her voice; and because he loved her, and always had, and always would,—oh, he knew that now, if he never had before!—it told him all the story of those years that had passed since he had seen her last.

"Sure!" said Angus gruffly. He gave her a curious look. "Hello, Prothero! Glad to see you. You've put on weight."

"Oh—I can't stay!" The words were torn from him, came in a breathless rush. "Look here—you've got to listen to me! I didn't know that it was you I'd find—but it shouldn't have mattered if I had known. I'm a deputy sheriff, and it's been put up to me to stop your moonshining. Oh, I know what you'll say—that no one has a right to make a law like this! But there's more to it than that. You're ruining boys who might amount to something but for you—making all sorts of trouble for your neighbors—"

He stopped to catch his breath. Angus, his great hands clenched, faced him with blazing eyes and cheeks grown red as fire. Janet stood still, her gray eyes wide and all her color gone, save from her lips.

"You—" Angus Mackay choked on his own words—"you spy! You always were a skulking little sneak—"

His rage was just the tonic Billy needed.

"That's as you please," he said. "The law's the law, and I'm here to warn you to obey it."

"The law!" Angus's voice was like to a bull's roar. "Don't talk to us of law! You—you saw it kill my father! And this—this law you talk of—that hypocrites and sneaks who stayed at home while we were fighting jammed through without a chance for us to have our say! Get off my land—"

"I'll go," said Prothero. "But you're just one of four. Janet—how about you? How about Donald and Allan? Have I got to go on—bring you to trial for dirty work like this you're doing here?"

"What's dirtier work than spying?" Angus lunged forward. His sister's voice, as cool as her gray eyes, checked him.

"Janet—I won't take his word alone—"

"Donald and Allan aren't here," she said. "It doesn't matter: we stand together here."

"Then—I can't do more than warn you—once—"

"Take your warning to blazes—get out of here!" Angus broke out again, straining against Janet's look like some great dog against its leash.

"Janet,"—Prothero was desperate in his appeal,—"can't we talk—can't I make you see what this must mean? You—to be caught like common criminals! I'll wait—for Donald and Allan, if you ask me—"

"I don't ask for anything. You'd better go."

He heard the ring of the old scorn in her voice: it was as if her fingers stung his cheek again.

This is

Jim Maitland

the tall, monocled Englishman with a weary manner and an amazing pair of fists, whose stirring adventures in out-of-the-way places, told by "Sapper" (Major H. C. McNeile), begin next month in McCLURE'S MAGAZINE.

"You know that I'll come back again—" Angus caught Billy's shoulders and shook him.

"By heaven!" he cried. "There's law on our side, too! Take care how you come on our ground after this! I'll loose the dogs—I'll break you in two—"

There was pain in that crushing grip: Prothero's shoulder was numb when Angus freed him. Yet through him there ran a thrill of pure delight. For he was not afraid, and knew it. He turned to Janet.

"You know I must come back," he said; and, waiting for no answer, he went to his horse and mounted it and rode away.

THE twilight of the summer day was fading when he turned into the woodland road that led him home. The memories of a score of years brought to their culminating points, surged through his mind. Twice, now, he had seen warmth in Janet's cool gray eyes as they met his, twice heard his name upon her lips in tones more beautiful than any music that he knew. And fate each time had forced his hand.

"Well," said Dineen, at dinner, "you went down?"

He nodded, with a sigh.

"No good," he said.

"Never a chance that it would be," said Dineen "Well, I'll call New York tomorrow—"

"No; let's finish it to-night—you and I. We needn't wait for help."

"Eh?" Dineen sat still a moment, thinking. "All right. Let's go."

"You see,"—Prothero hesitated,—"I've found I know these people, Dineen."

"Want to drop it?" Dineen was prompt with the suggestion. And for a moment Prothero was tempted. But no; Janet herself had given him the answer he must make.

"No," he said. "Get one of the Fords. We'll leave it by the road and walk the last mile."

A wet wind was sighing out of the east and dark clouds were coming up the valley as they drove down. Dineen smacked his lips.

"Dark as beyond," he said. "And that's for us. We've just this much to do—get to the still, and see it with our four eyes, and come away with some of the potheen. We've got them then, barring a jury of their friends to turn them loose!"

"Yes," Billy said, and drew upon his pipe.

They left the car within a gate; then walked on. A fine spray of rain misted Billy's glasses. Dineen was for the fields, a fording of the kill and a descent upon the spring-house from the rear. But Billy shook his head.

"We'll go by the front way," he said. "I'll feel better so, Dineen, even if I'm a fool!"

"Have it your way," said Dineen. "At that, they'll maybe not be watching on that side so close."

Lights showed within the house: a chained dog gave tongue and brought them to a stop under the maples along the road that led from the highway to the house. They waited a moment, then went on. Prothero was tense, and yet his spirit was relaxed.

They bore off to the left to pass the house, heading for the foot-bridge over the kill. Beyond the stream the ground rose; half-way up the rise was the spring-house that held their quarry. And then Dineen's foot on the first board of the bridge was like a signal shot. A dog barked not twenty feet away.

"Come on," Dineen called, and began to run. But now the headlight of an automobile flashed out—drenched them in blinding light.

Prothero, across the bridge a yard behind Dineen, heard Angus Mackay shouting—a moment later saw him between them and the spring-house. He came down, swinging his huge arms and shouting his rage. And then, at point-blank range, he fired. Dineen cried out and fell. Prothero stumbled over him, and heard a second bullet whistle over him.

Here was plain murder—no other word could cover it. And Billy Prothero, for the first time in his life, looked through a red and bloody mist. Angus was just beside him. Prothero flung all of himself at him—carried that great bulk down with the sheer impact of his spring and the blind fury of his beating fists upon the other's face.

They rolled together in the soft, wet earth. Billy, following his instinct, attacked the white face that loomed above him for a moment, drove fists for eyes and mouth. He felt the pressure of great arms around his middle, twisted out of that killing grip, and struck at Angus again.

Out of the light and into it again they stumbled. Prothero fought as a wolf must fight, with hands and feet and teeth. Once Angus caught him fairly, raised him and flung him free, then stood panting, ready to call quits. But back came Prothero and dragged him down again, fastening his grip at last upon Angus's throat, rolling with him until new hands tore at him and dragged him from his gasping victim.

"He's done—leave something for the jail that's waiting for him, sir!"

"Dineen! I thought—"

"Scraped the side of my head—knocked me out for a minute. There'll be more here—let's get what we came for before they're on us—"

A moment Billy Prothero stood, in the sickness of the revulsion from his rage. Angus was struggling at his feet, his face swollen.

"Come on—before it's too late!"

DINEEN was moving up the hill. Prothero followed. And then a flying figure swept down toward them.

"You're too late!" Janet cried. "Billy, get back! Look there—"

"Hold up!" Dineen's voice rang out. "Look out—if there's whisky there—"

Even as he spoke flames shot through the spring-house door. A moment later, door and house and hillside vanished in a blinding flash of light, a roar of sound. Embers and blazing thatch fell around them—fell hissing in the kill. But high above all sound rang Janet's laugh.

"You won!" she cried. "Oh, Billy—but so did I! The still is gone—but so is your evidence!"

"That part of it—but there's my head." Dineen was laughing, too.

"Drat your head!" said Billy Prothero. His breath came fast as he faced Janet.

"What could I do?" she cried. "They thought they had the right—I think I thought so, too. Until you came. Oh, Billy Prothero—it's been just hate and bitterness of memory all these years! Like Ishmaels we've been, the four of us! And you—this afternoon! I knew I couldn't stop you, or them! And so—I set the fire—to save us all—"

"You understood?" he said. "Janet—you knew—this time?"

"I understood," she said; "I understood, Billy."

Her fingers touched his cheek, clung to it, told him what words had never said.

Dineen saw what he saw, and:

"Evidence!" he said. "Now evidence be *hanged!*"

Our Earliest Ancestor—

The Dawn Man

An authorized interview by Hugh Weir with

Henry Fairfield Osborn *and* William King Gregory

President of the American Museum of Natural History — *Curator of the Department of Comparative Anatomy*

Illustrations by Charles R. Knight

BEFORE man—what? For generations knowledge has been blasting at the rocks of superstition and burrowing through the clouds of mystery surrounding the beginnings of the human race.

Is the great riddle of the universe—the *why* and *how* of man—any nearer an exact solution?

Did modern man, as we know him to-day, come full formed into this world? Science calls the human race, as we see ourselves, *Homo sapiens*, meaning the man that can think, reason, understand. Was this man a product of instantaneous creation or of gradual evolution?

If the latter, from where and what did he come—and when and how?

Who were our ancestors—or predecessors?

Were they animal or human, or some strange, weird combination of both?

In short, how was the earth peopled in the beginning, before the dawn of recorded intelligence?

What has the research of modern science to reply to these questions in the way of established facts—not of debatable theories?

In order to obtain the most complete and accurate answers to these queries, they were carried to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, the institution that, under the direction of Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, ranks as one of the world's leading authorities on the antiquity of the human race.

Years of patient study and the expenditure of thousands of dollars have established at the American Museum of Natural History an entire gallery devoted to the Age of Man, the completion of which will present to the public the first scientifically exact panorama of the men of prehistoric ages that has ever been assembled. To make this project possible, there was necessary not only the coöperation of the principal museums of the world, but the employment of experts in the work of exploration all the way from the sands of Egypt to the tundras of the Arctic.

The success of this project, under the painstaking direction of Doctors Osborn, William K. Gregory and J. H. McGregor, the latter two members of the staff of Columbia University, is one of the most significant accomplishments in the history of American science and the most conspicuous contribution yet made to the world's knowledge of the dawn of creation.

Somewhere in the recesses of remote antiquity the human race began. Just where or how is a matter

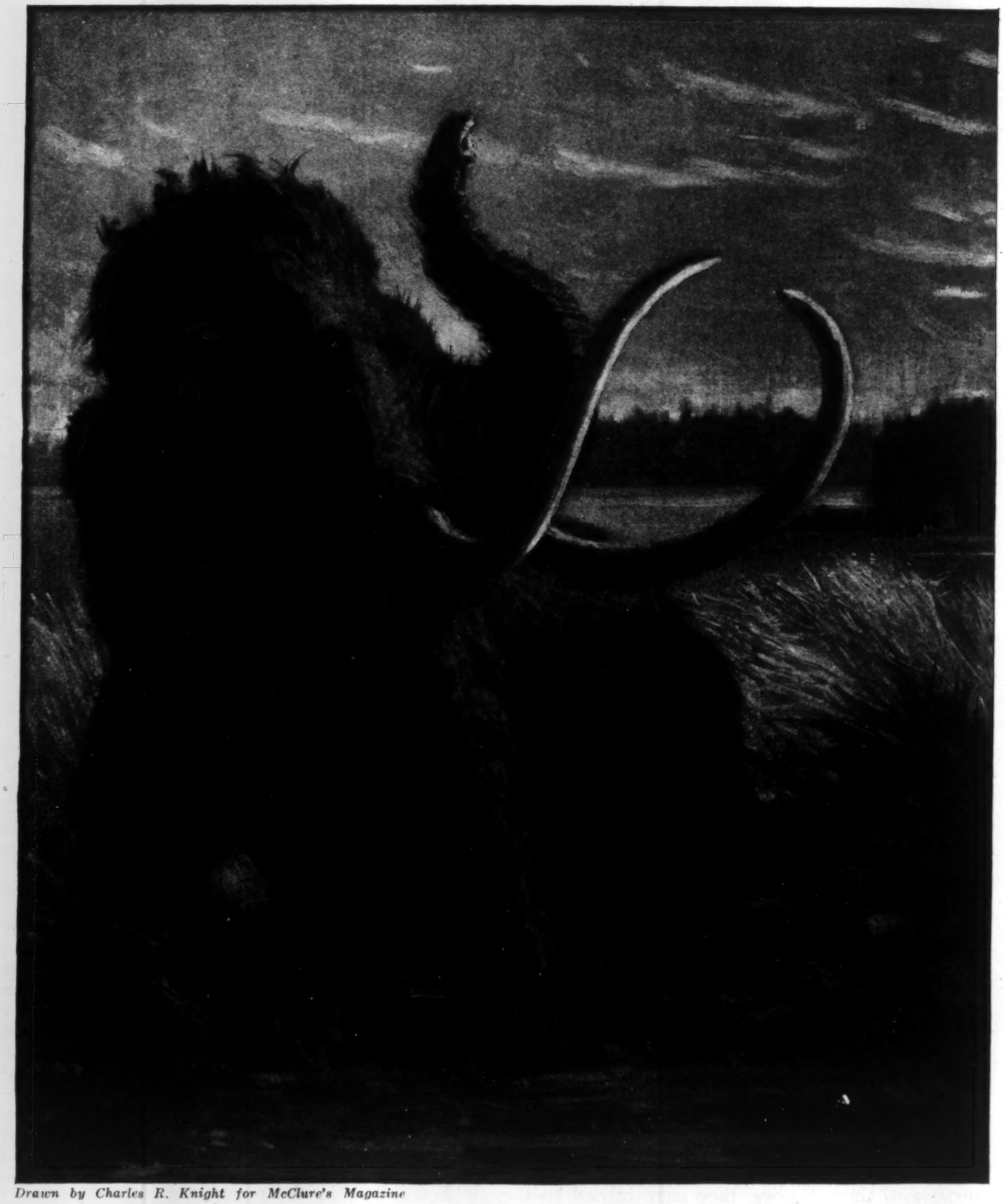
RECENTLY the Council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in convention at Cambridge, Massachusetts, made the following statement of its position as to the theory of evolution:

1. The council of the association affirms that, so far as the scientific evidences of the evolution of plants and animals and man are concerned, there is no ground whatever for the assertion that these evidences constitute a "mere guess." No scientific generalization is more strongly supported by thoroughly tested evidences than is that of organic evolution.
2. The council of the association affirms that the evidences in favor of the evolution of man are sufficient to convince every scientist of note in the world. The evidences are increasing in number and importance every year.
3. The council also affirms that the theory of evolution is one of the most potent of the great influences for good that have thus far entered into human experience; it has promoted the progress of knowledge, it has fostered unprejudiced inquiry, and it has served as an invaluable aid in humanity's search for truth in many fields.
4. The council of the association is convinced that any legislation attempting to limit the teaching of any scientific doctrine so well established and so widely accepted by specialists as is the doctrine of evolution would be a profound mistake, which could not fail to injure and retard the advancement of knowledge and of human welfare, by denying the freedom of teaching and inquiry which is essential to all progress.

EDWIN GRANT CONKLIN, *Chairman*
HENRY FAIRFIELD OSBORN
CHARLES B. DAVENPORT
Committee.

©American Museum of Natural History

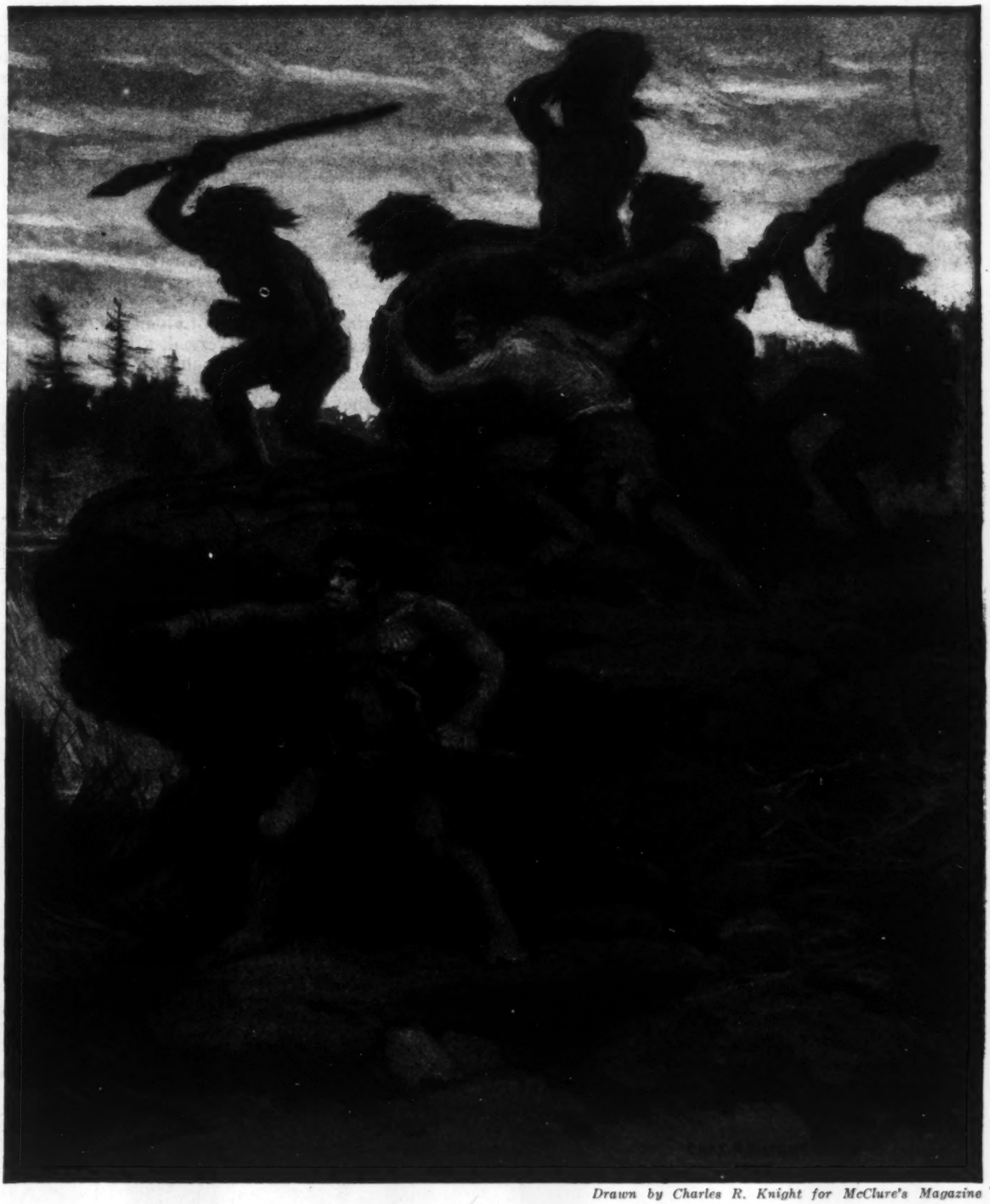
Prehistoric reindeer and woolly mammoth; a painting by Charles R. Knight in the American Museum of Natural History



Drawn by Charles R. Knight for McClure's Magazine

A Scientifically Accurate Picture of a Pleistocene Mammoth

The Dawn Man (Homo eoanthropus) knew no weapons except rude flints and spears of wood, but he had learned to attack the enormous animals of his day in bands. In the painting above Mr. Knight shows a group of Dawn Men beginning an attack on a huge mammoth which has become mired in the bog to which it has gone for water. The Dawn Men would never have attacked the mammoth were it not at a disadvantage, as here. Mr. Knight's reconstruction of the mammoth is founded on actual skeletal remains of the entire creature.



Drawn by Charles R. Knight for McClure's Magazine

Dawn Men Evolving Means of Attacking the Mammoth

This depiction of the Dawn Man is based upon the fragmentary skull shown on page 23, and on a few other fossil bones.

The skull of the Dawn Man indicates what the contour of his face must have been, and the position of the spinal column shows that this early man did not stand erect. As to the body, while there are no skeletons of that, basing our judgment on the study of the fossil bones found at Piltdown, the Dawn Man was the powerful, clumsy, upward-struggling creature Mr. Knight shows us here.

largely of conjecture, theory, speculation. But an immediate and emphatic negative is returned by the American Museum of Natural History in answer to the first question on the list: "Is man descended from the monkey?"

"He most certainly is not descended from any existing or known true monkey," Dr. Osborn stated. "Man has a long line of ancestry of his own, reaching perhaps two million years into the dim shadows of time. The growth of man through the ages was parallel to that of the family of apes and monkeys, but representing a stock absolutely separate and distinct."

To understand and answer intelligently the mooted question of our ancestry, man or monkey, Dr. Osborn explained, it is necessary to know what is meant by the theory of evolution. This assumes that human beings were not always human; that long ago, time periods running into millions of years, man's ancestors were creatures in a process of gradual development.

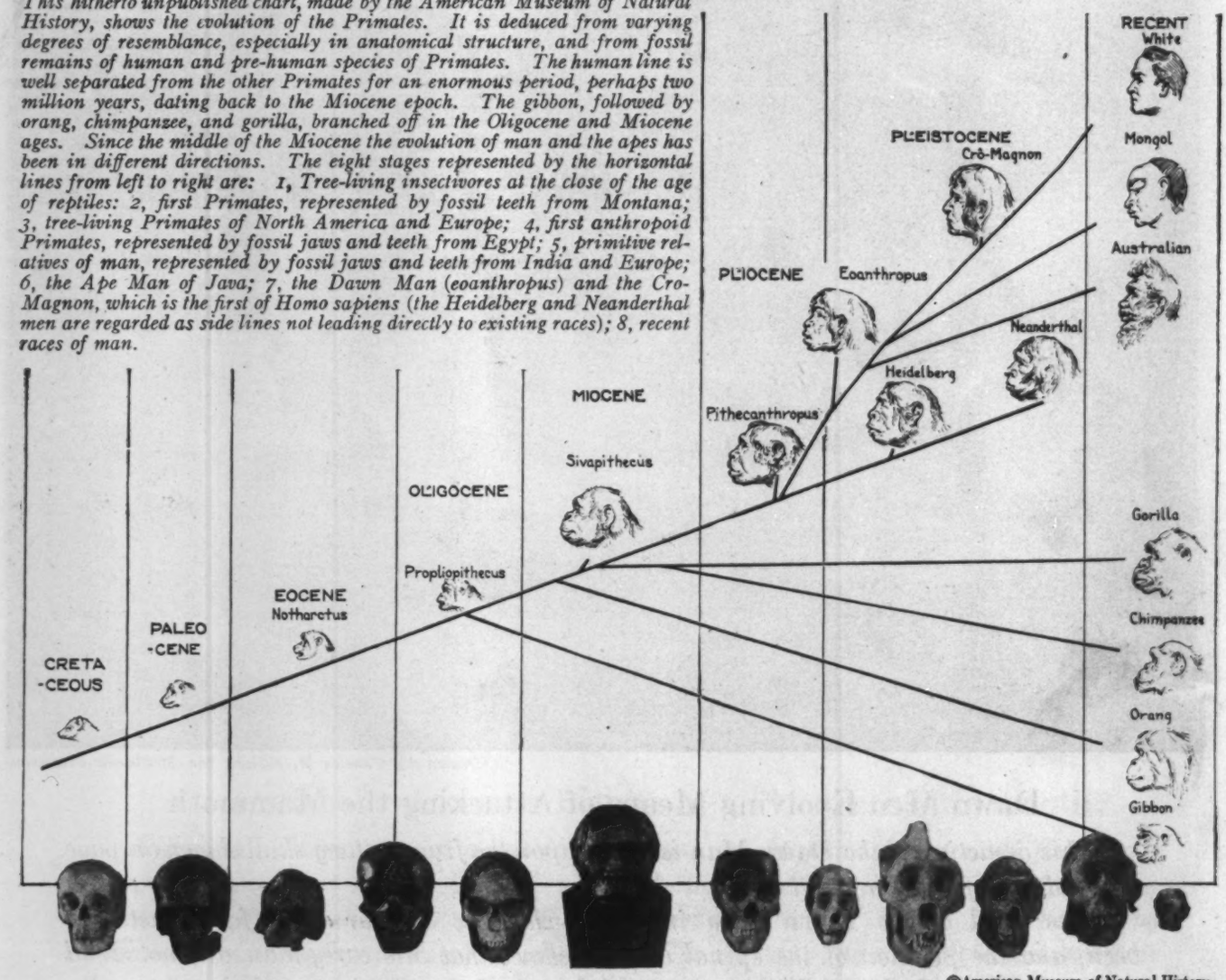
"Man's ancestors were undoubtedly monkey-like or ape-like creatures," Dr. Osborn continued. "But to assume that this admission means that man is descended from or is now only a changed form of ape or monkey is to assume an absurdity. The common ancestors of *Homo sapiens* and present-day apes and monkeys were mammals of the Primate stem. Ages ago, perhaps five million or more years, the Primates began, in the process of evolution, to split into groups, separate and distinct, which developed into the progenitors of man, the modern ape, and the modern monkey.

"In remote antiquity the Primate stem grew gradually away from other orders of mammals. Various offshoots reached forth, tentative branches as it were. We know a few of the strange families of monkeys, extinct now for hundreds of thousands of years, that first resulted. These passed, while the main stem, still groping its way, gave forth the first of the anthropoid apes. Gradually yet another stock was set apart and diverged, a humanoid stock consisting of what aptly might be termed experimental or tentative man.

"While the ape stock was creating respectively the living orangs, the gibbons, the chimpanzees, the gorillas, and some of their extinct ancestors, the first humanoid stock, distinguished by larger skulls and better brains, was making various experiments in the forerunners of modern man.

THE ASCENT OF MAN

This hitherto unpublished chart, made by the American Museum of Natural History, shows the evolution of the Primates. It is deduced from varying degrees of resemblance, especially in anatomical structure, and from fossil remains of human and pre-human species of Primates. The human line is well separated from the other Primates for an enormous period, perhaps two million years, dating back to the Miocene epoch. The gibbon, followed by orang, chimpanzee, and gorilla, branched off in the Oligocene and Miocene ages. Since the middle of the Miocene the evolution of man and the apes has been in different directions. The eight stages represented by the horizontal lines from left to right are: 1, Tree-living insectivores at the close of the age of reptiles: 2, first Primates, represented by fossil teeth from Montana; 3, tree-living Primates of North America and Europe; 4, first anthropoid Primates, represented by fossil jaws and teeth from Egypt; 5, primitive relatives of man, represented by fossil jaws and teeth from India and Europe; 6, the Ape Man of Java; 7, the Dawn Man (eoanthropus) and the Cro-Magnon, which is the first of Homo sapiens (the Heidelberg and Neanderthal men are regarded as side lines not leading directly to existing races); 8, recent races of man.



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MAN'S PLACE AMONG THE PRIMATES

Between man on the left and the apes on the right is the Ape Man of Java, which possessed both human and anthropoid characteristics

Restorations of the predecessors of man

"The human race as we see it to-day is a definite product of evolution, an ascending evolution which established the predecessors of modern man as well as his immediate ancestors, but for at least a million years it was distinct and apart from the purely animal stock."

A similar example of evolution cited by Dr. Gregory is the existing families of equines (horses, zebras, asses), tapirs, and rhinoceroses. By no stretch of the imagination, he points out, can it be said that the horse is descended from the rhinoceros or the tapir, or *vice versa*.

"Yet," Dr. Gregory states, "this group of animals, now separated by wide structural differences, represents the surviving fragments of what was once a great natural order scientifically known as Perissodactyls, or odd-toed, hoofed animals.

"The original stem of this order of animals flourished in the northern hemisphere in large numbers during the long series of ascending geologic formations from the Lower Eocene onward, and much is known of the detailed history or evolution of its various branches. Now it is a known fact that as we go backward into geologic time the differences between the various families of the Perissodactyls, now so pronounced, become less and less until in the Eocene we find the so-called horses, tapirs, and rhinoceroses of to-day, so similar in appearance that expert paleontologists have difficulty in distinguishing one from the other.

"The scientist infers that this is because in those remote ages the diverging lines approach a common starting-point, and that their resemblance is due to inheritance from a common ancestor."

So man, the apes, and monkeys, traced back through the ages by means of fossilized remains, undoubtedly reach a common starting-point. The difficulty of proving this by unbroken chains of fossil evidence, as can be done with the Perissodactyls, Dr. Gregory explains, lies in the difference of habits of the order of Perissodactyls and the order of Primates. The former lived on the plains, where the elements had a better chance to preserve their bones for posterity.

"Our ancestors or predecessors," says Dr. Osborn, "lived among the forests. Undoubtedly most of their time was spent on the ground. The trees, however, offered refuge from storm and danger, and the human brain was quick to see such an advantage. This fact, together with the absence of any definite form of burial, made the fossil remains of prehistoric man exceedingly rare. Upon death the humic acid of the forest leaves hastened decay of man's ancestors, while the skeletons of the ancestors of the horse, tapir, and rhinoceros, living on the plains where the preserving elements had better play, are comparatively abundant."

Restored skulls in the order of the four species above. In the two skulls at the left the original fossil parts are black, the restored parts white

The Ape's Failure to Keep Up

WHAT is behind the mystery of man's rapid development, while the ape and monkey, of the same stock, are still animal? What was the spark that, some fifteen hundred thousand years ago, sent the humanoid branch of the Primate stock on a path of glory to an ultimate position "a little lower than the angels"?

Science answers, "Evolution," or "Adaptation," or "Natural selection." But the layman, pressing his *whys* and *hows*, seeks more of the secret. The ape, he knows, has toiled along the long path of evolution together with man; yet to-day the ape can not speak, can not form the simplest rude instrument. Man's remote ancestors, hundreds of thousands of years ago, formed rude instruments and spoke to one another. What, then, was the cause of man's development—the ape's failure to keep step?

"Glands," Dr. Gregory says, "control the growth and development of structure. We know the ductless

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A mural of Mastodons, royal bisons, and horses of the prehistoric ages;

glands, the thyroid, pituitary, and similar depositories, manufacture secretions which, let into the blood, create changes in structure. The pituitary gland controls the growth and special form of the skull, and hence directly affects the size and shape of the brain-case. Interstitial glands renewed in a mouse cause a new growth of teeth and hair.

"It is safe to assume that the action of glandular secretions in the humanoid stock, particularly the pituitary gland, was responsible for the rapid brain development and other structural changes, the erect posture, shorter teeth, speech, and other characteristics that distinguish man from the ape.

"Man as we know him did not come into the world overnight," Dr. Osborn continues. "He was not created instantly. Nor was he an accident. He is the product of a laborious growth, a gradual upbuilding and improvement, the various stages of which extend farther back into time than the human mind, perhaps, will ever conceive. But from the few fossils assembled and catalogued it is possible to establish certain elemental truths as to the beginnings of modern man.

"Modern science is able to estimate the age of man who made implements and fire, and his immediate predecessors, at approximately five hundred thousand years. In my opinion, the cradle of the human race was in Central Asia."*

"What is the most important recent discovery as to the origin of man?" Dr. Osborn was asked.

"The finding of the remains of the so-called 'Dawn Man of Piltdown' in England. When we remember that an entire century of exploration in all parts of the globe for remains of prehistoric man has yielded us only five species, nearly or remotely related to modern man, the difficulty of locating fossils of any scientific value will be understood. It was in 1911 that workmen excavating in the Piltdown gravel pit on the banks of the river Ouse found what was part of a fossilized skull bone.

"Armed only with this faint clue, Charles Dawson and Arthur Smith Woodward, the latter keeper of fossils in the British Museum, began a patient search of the Piltdown gravel, extending up to the present time and still incompleted. The result of this laborious search was the finding of a portion of the jaw bone, several important parts of the skull, three teeth, and the remains of several flint instruments. This is a slender result, it may seem to the layman, but sufficient for the scientist to establish definitely several vital facts.

"The first is that the Piltdown fossils belong to one of the first 'Dawn Men' of Great Britain, who may be said to have lived as long ago as 500,000 B. C. In the year 1917, at a point about two miles distant from the first bones, other bones were unearthed in a second gravel pit, which proved to be the missing links of scientific identification. These consisted of a first lower molar tooth, a bit of bone of the forehead near the right eyebrow, and the middle part of the occipital bone of the skull. Placed side by side with the corresponding fossils of the first discovery, they agreed precisely.

"There was not the shadow of doubt, the two grinding teeth differing only in age and showing that the owner of the first was much more advanced in years. There is no longer any question that the chinless jaw, shaped almost exactly like that of a chimpanzee, and with its relatively long and narrow teeth, belongs with the well formed forehead and the fairly capacious brain-case of the skull."

Found in the Piltdown Pit

"HAS science established anything definite as to how the prehistoric man lived, what clothes he wore, what tools and weapons he had?"

"To a certain extent, yes. In the Piltdown gravel pit have been found three distinct types of flints, identified roughly as a rough spear-head, a hide-dresser, and a hammer-stone. Undoubtedly they are just the kind of tools that such a very primitive, semi-human creature as the Piltdown Man would have been capable of producing. And there is no doubt that he had discovered the origin and use of artificial fire.

"As for his shelter, it was probably much like that of the animals, except of a more intelligent, permanent selection, probably varying from friendly caves to rude protections formed from the leaves and twigs of trees and shrubbery. It must be emphasized that the prehistoric man did not live in trees, like the ape and monkeys, and that he walked erect.

"Brute strength undoubtedly ruled with him, as with the animals. It was a case of the survival of the fittest—every individual for himself. We know that he had no form of burial, but we do not know that the physical characteristics of his brain formation were

*The third Asiatic expedition, of which Dr. Osborn is the director, is now adding evidence for the view that Central Asia was the center of dispersion not only for man but for many other lines of mammals.

of Natural History

painted by Charles R. Knight for the American Museum of Natural History

like those of modern man. His must have been a constant fight for life, not only against the elements but against the animals—the extinct cave bear, the cave lion, cave hyena, woolly rhinoceros, and the mammoth—all, like himself, long extinct."

The most controversial subject relating to the Piltdown Man is that concerning his brain size. Was it a small brain-case, intermediate, or even of a larger type? "Unfortunately, several pieces of the skull, of critical importance, are missing from the middle of the skull top," says Dr. Gregory. "This has made possible markedly different opinions of experts. If the pieces of the skull are placed close together the brain would be a very small one, estimated at about 1,070 cubic centimeters. If these same pieces are tilted upward and moved farther apart, the brain capacity would be as large as that of modern man, nearly 1,500 cubic centimeters. The revised estimates of Elliot Smith and others place the brain size somewhat below 1,300 cubic centimeters.

"The temporal bone, the back of the head, and the whole brain-case, as well as the brain-cast, are distinctly human in character, although of a low type, while the lower jaw and the dentition are prevailingly simian or ape-like. While this distribution of human and ape-like character was unexpected and in a way unprecedented, the erect pose of the body, the freeing of the hands from locomotive functions, and the human development of the brain set the Piltdown Man quite definitely apart from any of the known living or fossil apes.

Man in the Making

"WHETHER or not the 'Dawn Man of Piltdown' could talk is an open question," Dr. Gregory continued. "In modern man the principal muscle of the tongue is divided into many separate strands, each with its own nerve supply; whereas in the apes this muscle is less pronounced and not so much divided. In the human skull this muscle is attached to two small tubercles on the inner side of the chin, known as the genial tubercles. In the Piltdown Man, as in the apes, these tubercles are missing, and the tongue rests below upon a shelf of bone. However, it does not follow of necessity that the power of speech was denied to him because of this fact. An examination of the brain-cast shows in the temporal region an elliptical swelling, which foreshadows a certain greatly expanded center in the modern brain of man—a center that recent clinical research leads us to associate with the power of spontaneous elaboration of speech and the ability to recall names.

This strange creature may indeed be classed as perhaps the most conspicuous example that science has produced to date of a 'man in the making'—one of the innumerable experiments made in nature's vast laboratory in the development of humanoid stock. The Piltdown Man was undoubtedly an early branch of those sub-men from the recesses of time which had achieved a low human stage of brain and brain-case in the process of evolution."

"Who was the first man fully and completely known to modern science?" was the next question put to Dr. Osborn.

"Unquestionably, the oldest human race of which we now have a complete skeleton is the Neanderthal Man, who lived in western Europe during the last glacial period, probably from 75,000 to 50,000 B. C. The first of the Neanderthal bones were found in the Neander Valley in Germany in 1856, but it was not until many years later that enough were located to make an entire skeleton, and then several countries contributed to the collection, France, Belgium, and Spain. These represent a distinct species of man, exhibiting features never found combined in any other human race, and yet definitely removed from the modern stock of mankind.

"But the Neanderthal Man is only one of several distinct offshoots of the humanoid Primate stem, and, so far from being the oldest, is probably the youngest of the early relatives of man.

"The probable ancestor of the Neanderthal Man is the so-called Heidelberg man, a fossil that may be anywhere from 250,000 to 500,000 years old. From this single bone we have constructed a replica of what may be fairly assumed to be the skull of the owner. The upper dental arch, the region of the cheeks, and the jaw articulation have been restored with a high degree of probability. The most doubtful feature, of course, is the size of the brain-case. The jaw is of remarkable size and strength and remarkably ape-like in certain features, especially in the absence of a chin; but the teeth are altogether human in their detailed characteristics.

"The first conundrum relating to our human ancestry is that of the Trinil Ape Man of Java, sometimes called Pithecanthropus. This is as old or older, than the Piltdown Man. In the year 1891 a Dutch

© American Museum

Stag-hunters of the New Stone age, the progenitors of modern man in northern Europe; From a mural painting by Charles R. Knight

army surgeon, Eugen Dubois, dug up on the banks of the Bengawan River a collection of strange fossils, consisting of a skull cap, a thigh bone, and two grinding teeth. Elliot Smith, most eminent English authority on brain structure, who has examined a cast of the brain, affirms that it is on the human side of the fence.

"The skull that has been constructed from the guidance of the few bones is designed to show its half-human, half-anthropoid resemblance as suggested by the top of the cranium, the only part definitely known, which, while more human than any known form of ape, yet is more animal-like than any man."

Another Pre-Human Link?

ANOTHER discovery of a possible pre-human link in our ancestry is that of a small fossil jaw found in the Oligocene of northern Egypt, a geologic formation of two and a half million years ago. This, in the opinion of Dr. Max Schlosser of Munich, is at least structurally ancestral to both the higher types of apes and man. If this theory is correct the owner of this fossilized jaw may have belonged to the far-off common stock from which sprang both man and the anthropoid apes.

"The immediate predecessors of modern man," says Dr. Osborn, "were the race known as the Cro-Magnon, which made its appearance in Europe during the Upper Paleolithic age geologically, or from 15,000 to 20,000 B. C. Up to this time the Neanderthal Man had been supreme. He was a much lower being in the racial scale, with beetling brows, low receding forehead, protruding jaw, and a shambling gait. The Cro-Magnons, appearing suddenly among these creatures, came from the south, probably from the region of the Mediterranean. They were the nearest approach to modern man yet evolved.

"We have so complete a record of them that with their arrival we can begin to write the history of the prehistoric man in more or less detail. The nearest modern comparison to the Cro-Magnon in facial

of Natural History

they are closely related to existing people in Scandinavia and Great Britain in the American Museum of Natural History

appearance is the Eskimo. The longer head and the broader, more developed face were now beginning to distinguish humankind and to emphasize the vast difference between them and the animal stock.

"It was just after the last glacial age, and it was very cold in Europe, so cold that stag and reindeer were very abundant. The heat-loving lions and hyenas managed to survive only by spending most of their time huddled in the recesses of caves.

"The Cro-Magnon race brought with them two new cultures—the beginnings of art and the first bone industry. Crude pictures of their handiwork can still be seen, traced on the walls of caves in southern France, the first attempt of man to reproduce and preserve the life he visualized about him—distinct drawings of the mammoth, evidently started with black outlines and then filled in with red, brown, and yellow shadings. The prehistoric man also began to wear necklaces of perforated wolf's teeth and bracelets made from the tusks of mammoths.

"We can picture a continual warfare between the Cro-Magnons and the Neanderthals, the latter fighting a hopeless battle for their very existence against a foe with a larger and more active brain. It is easy to imagine the last desperate stands of scattered bands of Neanderthals, crouched on the overhanging cliffs and relying only on rocks and rude spears to combat an enemy armed with bows and arrows and clever enough to attack from above.

"Curiously enough, there is no evidence of any widespread interbreeding between the different species of prehistoric man. It was a case always of the complete extermination of the weak by the strong. The law of the survival of the fittest is not a theory, but a fact.

First Man to Till the Soil

"THUS, when the Neolithic race, slightly higher in the scale of intellect, ushered in the last chapters of the development of the human race before the dawn of recorded history, we find the Cro-Magnons in turn

yielding up their identity before the sweep of a mightier adversary. The Neolithic men brought to the world for the first time directed human intelligence. With them came the first agriculture, the first manufacturing. The tilling of the soil and the making of pottery appeared, and the beginning of copper-smelting. Man's primitive ingenuity went a step farther and the first musical instrument, the harp, was fashioned.

"Then, we may say, the true modern man inherited the earth."

"Where is man bound?"

"That depends entirely on what means are adopted against the unchecked multiplication of the less fit," says Dr. Gregory. "Evolution is going on to-day, just as it has since the beginnings of time."

This is true not only of the lower forms of animal life, but in man as well. Evidence of this is found, as Dr. Gregory points out, in the wide difference between the degrees of development in the extremes of existing humanity. The aborigines of Australia, representing the lowest form of modern human development, are probably as far below modern man in the racial scale as they are above the Piltdown Man whose brain capacity was estimated at something under 1,300 cubic centimeters, but of a low order. The Australian aborigine's brain capacity averages around 1,250 cubic centimeters, but frequently exceeds that figure. The higher types of modern men have brain-cases with as high as 1,900 cubic centimeters capacity. Bismarck's brain measured 1,965 cubic centimeters. The average is from 1,500 to 1,600 cubic centimeters.

"The fate of such inferior peoples is sealed," declares Dr. Gregory. "They will be wiped out just as surely, just as relentlessly, though perhaps in a more humane and less primitive fashion, as the Cro-Magnon exterminated the Neanderthal. The law of the survival of the fittest operates still.

"What are the future bounds of the intellect of man? We can only speculate for the future on the evidence of the past. Half a million years ago, when the world was young, the picture of the Piltdown Man was the account of human achievement. Picture man to-day, and then try to visualize him in the dim future when the world is old.

"The evolution of no other animal has kept pace with that of man. The apes, who started neck and neck with him far down the ages, have fallen dismally far behind." Will they ever draw abreast?

Science has noted the many similarities of ape and man. John Daniel, the ape that died in New York City last year, bore remarkable resemblance to man in many of his bones as well as muscles. Cross-sections of his brain showed structures comparing almost exactly with cross-sections of the human brain.

It is certain, also, that the brain of the ape is evolving slowly to a higher stage. John Daniel acquired many human habits. He could manipulate the faucets of a wash basin as well as his master. He could draw a bath. Other apes have exhibited the elemental spark of intelligence. One test showed an ape able to reason that by piling boxes one upon another he could reach a banana suspended from the ceiling of a room. The processes that led him to that solution, anthropologists agree, were undoubtedly the beginnings of reason. There is no cause to believe that these faint evidences of intelligence in apes may not herald a greater development. But—

"The ape or monkey can never become a man."

Science says, in spite of the foregoing evidences of similarity, that there is not the slightest possibility of the ape family becoming human. The evidences of similarity point to another conclusion. Traced back through the ages by fossilized bones here and there, they show that the resemblances between man and ape were closer and more numerous half a million years ago and closer still a million years ago.

Not only is the rate of man's development or evolution infinitely greater than that of the ape, his nearest equal in appearance and brain power, but, Dr. Gregory says, the evolution of the apes to-day is away from rather than toward man.

"The ape is man's closest relative, a distant cousin, if you will, but the aborigines of Australia, the lowest humankind, are far above the highest ape. The gorilla, most frequently credited in fiction with a chance of becoming human, is growing larger tusks; his body is becoming heavier; his jaw is becoming elongated like that of a wolf or a dog instead of short and round like that of a man; instead of applying his hands to the uses of the hands of the lowest human, he is showing a tendency to revert to their use for locomotion; he is perhaps even less upright to-day than his ancestors were in the Miocene period, a million and a half years ago.

"All these and similar tendencies, easily observable in modern apes, rule them out of the remotest possibility of ever becoming a man."

The trouble with the apes and monkeys was that they were not progressive. When the Primates split, millions of years ago, into the groups that finally developed into apes, monkeys, and men, the man strode rapidly into a stage of progressive evolution, while the monkeys and apes took a conservative course. It might have been the action of glands, operated by some unfathomable forces that we can not isolate.

Effect of Glands in Man

MANY modern scientists credit the glandular secretions with controlling the structural growth of man and animals,—and hence man's remarkable development,—is there no inkling of the force behind the glands?

"There probably is a complex series of interdependent causes," says Dr. Gregory. "Environment and food habits may have stimulated the glands to diverse functions. Scientists are just beginning to investigate these glands. Many recent experiments tend to show that the different vitamines in foods produce different effects on the ductless glands, and thus indirectly upon the skull form, color of the skin, stature, and other characteristics of man.

"In short, the foods of various races may have contributed to the development of their racial characteristics."

Indeed, F. P. Armitage, an English scientist, in his "Diet and Race," claims to have recognized the different food elements that make the Negro black, woolly-headed, and long-skulled, the Mongolian yellow, smooth-skinned, and round-headed, the Latin swarthy, and the Nordic blond.

"If this is true," Dr. Gregory concludes, "and man can master the glands and force them to do his bidding through improved food habits, what will be the course of evolution, aided by man? A hint is perceived in the stages of development of the highest and lowest forms of humanity to-day. The effects are apparent—the causes are gradually being brought to light—the control of the future is the great aim."

Holding her little salon like a far, far distant cousin of Mme. Récamier

Kind Hearts Are More than Coronets, But See What Happened to—

Eleanore the Second-Hand

By Estelle Loomis

Illustrations by Henry Raleigh

IT seems strange to have to introduce her to you. Why, everybody knew Good Old Boone. Everybody.

Oh, of course, this hot, this sticky-hot, fly-buzzing July forenoon, as the recipients of those tottery, up-hill, "Please call Monday, 10 a.m.," postals added their flushed and fluttering presence to the already swarming flux of murmuring stage folk, packed and packing into J. Fritz Perkins's stuffy little theatrical agency, it might have been possible that some few amongst those chattering, excited candidates for that New Orleans Stock Company engagement had never heard of Eleanore Boone. But, once their eyes had fallen upon our star,—rusty blonde, blessed and cursed with a perfumed heart,—they were pretty sure to find themselves looking again. Looking again at that extravaganza of vari-colored beads frolicking over her wrinkled, slightly soiled magenta. Looking again at that Parisian chapeau, lovely relic of a luckless summer shower. And from just that "again and again and again" there unravels the variegated yarn of Eleanore, the Second-hand.

Nervous and restless, to-day, seemed that tall and loosely languid, sad, gray-eyed lady. And as the rattling, hard-worked elevator vomited forth at every trip more, and more, and more to join the laughing, buzzing throng, the magnetism of her responses to the usual gushing cascade of "Oh, how are you, Boone?"—"Hello there, Eleanore!"—"Morning, El!" seemed to be for some reason sadly lacking in its customary voltage.

And when, toward noon, in the sudden hush, all heads were turning toward the door of Mr. Perkins's private office, still stranger did it seem that this popular queen of Fritz's agency, ordinarily so conspicuous, should stealthily edge her way through the crowd, back, 'way back into the hallway.

In that doorway, tall, majestic as an Indian chief in a flowing necktie, Mr. Perkins was speaking:

"No use, no use, ladies and gentlemen! No use anybody's waiting any longer. That New Orleans manager just 'phoned me he couldn't be here to-day. . . . Yes, third time, now. . . . No, no, nothing! Nothing to-day. . . . What? . . . Oh, hello, Cooper—sober again? . . . Well, you just got to keep on coming, that's all."

And as the crowd pushes, squirms, jams, potentate Perkins extracts negligently from the inevitable

paper bag in a lower berth of his rat-colored waistcoat a pale vanilla gumdrop, and raises his voice.

"No! *No!* NO!" shouted Mr. Perkins. "Here, keep your paws off my necktie! . . . Didn't I tell you? No! . . . Holy cats, don't pull my arm like that! I can't attend to but one at a time, can I? . . . What? . . . New Cuckoo Building. . . . Well, don't blame me; he said he wanted a buxom blonde."

And now, Mr. Perkins's hand, thoughtfully meandering round his strong, square chin, came suddenly to a stop. His eyes, fixed in the direction of the doorway, lightened menacingly. Then, "Miss Boone! Miss Boone!" he called out. And as the thunder of his voice crashed in upon the crowd, mutinous expressions followed his viciously elbowed way toward the door. "Isn't that Miss Boone out there? Why, over there—by that-uh—"

Behind a persistent cougher in a brownish derby, a rusty head, topped by what were perhaps the most expensive orchid plumes the Perkins agency had ever sullied, now poked out from hiding. "Why—why, you ought to know me by this time, Fritz!" and Eleanore Boone defended herself with a pale, sheepish smile.

"Know you! You bet your life I know you!" and Mr. Perkins had pushed some one roughly aside. "I know you altogether too well for my own good!" Shocked was the crowd. What, the queen deposed? —Fritz's long-recognized favorite? And, in the tumultuous silence, "Didn't I tell you yesterday, Miss Boone, that I never wanted to see you inside this office again?"

The room was now as still as death. Eleanore's face was as white as the wilted pond-lilies in her girdle. "Why, I—I—why, I thought you were only fooling, Fritz."

"Fooling! You're the only one that's been doing the fooling in this office. I tell you, Miss Boone," and Mr. Perkins brandished a high fist, "you've fooled me out of my last commission! And what's more, I—"

"But, Fritz! I—"

"No, sir; I'm through. And when I'm through, I'm through!"

"Aw, Fritz!"

"*Through!*" And the next instant all that was left of Mr. Perkins was his name upon the private door.

And in fact, after her wondering friends had wriggled their excited way through the press downstairs to the street, all that was visible of the discomfited Lady Eleanore was a farewell flourish of silken draperies disappearing into the sanctuary of Blanche Dare's lingering limousine filled with ladies, oh, lovely ladies—ladies who never had to wait in agencies.

FROM under the snelter of a pawnbroker's awning, the sputtering, stimulated little group left behind watched the big, royal-blue car glide gloriously away out of sight. It was black-haired Vanne Burke, one of the liveliest spirits of the "Boone crowd's" inner circle, who now broke into their talk with her rough, cocktail enthusiasm:

"Now, that's all right, fellers, but you can't blame Fritz for being sore on El. You all know the way he's always favored her. You know how he's done—why, half the time, if he thought El might land a part, hasn't he always sent her on ahead to see a manager?"

"That's right, Vanne—and keeps back the rest of his people till El's tried for the part."

"Yes; and what does El usually do? Doesn't she usually happen to run into some down-and-out Jane there in the manager's office—some girl from some other agency, or who's blown in on her own? And what happens? Doesn't that bum Jane always wheedle El with some hard-luck story? 'Not a stitch of underwear on under her old rags!' whined Vanne, "or some kind of a weeping obbligato. Anyway, good old El falls for it, lets this Jane go in first to see the manager—and three to one would-be suicide cops the part. Anyway, that's what Fritz was mad about to-day."

"Yes," said some one; "and not only does poor old Fritzo get gypped out of his little commish, but we all get left, too!"

"Sure," chimed in another; "we might have tried for some of those swell parts!"

"Darned fine girl, El Boone!" an uncertain masculine voice amongst the feminine flutterers. "Fines' girl in—in—"

"Oh, shut up, Cooper; you're drunk!"

"In New—New—New—New Zealand!"

"Well," yapped up one little stingy-haired, watery personality,—the crowd now swaying on up Broadway,—"I tell you, I'd never take any of that smarty talk from Perkins if I were Boone—all the swell clothes and swell friends she's got!"

"And there you are! Friends! Friends! That's the whole trouble with El Boone in a nutshell." It was a voice now that the crowd paid more deference to. For when the cold, flaming-haired, talented little Kitty Clover (now a Perkins *alumna*, and visitant to such humble theatrical regions only in Summer Stock days) gave speech, her lawyer-like presentment was usually as if she had silenced a court-room. "Friends!" she sneered. "Millionaire Boone! Altogether too easy she has it for her own good. It's those friends of hers that have spoiled her whole career. Why, I was up to see her yesterday, at Blanche Dare's. There she was, girls, breakfast in bed, in Dare's lace nightgown, Emma bringing in the tray—big pink rose on it—squab on toast. Talking away, she was, about this poor girl whose landlady let her sleep on the parlor sofa.

"Why, I can just hear El now: 'Kit, that poor girl couldn't go to bed till all the lodgers had gone upstairs—and, Kit, they always played poker till two in the morning! Kit, she needed that part more than I did—I've got a home, you know—'"

"Home!" The crowd all roared. "I should say she had—plenty of 'em!"

And indeed, to most of the other discouraged agency-haunters, out of work long, long after Christmas, it did seem that Eleanore's luck was enviable, her troubles miraculously mild. Much of her time was spent in some of the most luxurious homes in Manhattan. But wait a minute—don't judge her too rashly. Nobody ever called El Boone a grafter. "Dearie" was what her rich friends called her, and with the Broadway borrowers it was usually "Good Old Boone." Eleanore was an all-around; she played no favorites. Kit Clover and Vanne Burke, perhaps, knew her best; but, whether it was seedy Carolyn of the Jazz Flappers (fourth company, Southern), or Mrs. Riverside Drive, Eleanore's religion tingled through her hearty handshake with equal cordiality. Up at Harlem or down-and-out, it was pretty cold weather when Dearie couldn't accomplish the loan of a sable coat, or Good Old Boone refused to be touched for a V-dollar bill.

Why, then, did Eleanore live, now in a seven-a-week lodging-house, and now in a fifteen-room-

"Don't you know this is a cutthroat business, this stage game?"

seven-bath apartment on Central Park West? Because—well, oh, mercy me, we can't run down through the whole dynasty of her benefactors. We can't tell of half the doors that had been flung wide open to Eleanore Boone. But just take that race-track bookie's wife for a sample; she's as good as any. In that Texas hotel, one desolate November night, she too must have looked again, and again, and again at Eleanore—Eleanore oiling and bandaging that rheumatic old shoulder; Eleanore telling stories half the night long. Anyway, El hadn't been back in New York very long before, jingling from a fumed-oak-and-red-leather flat uptown, there came a gleeful telephonic voice: "Say, Dearie, hub's gone to Louisville. . . . Oh, nonsense—come on up! What's the use of an angel like you perishing in an old hash-house?"

Sometimes, in the Circassian-walnut-and-old-tapestry Park Avenue duplex of a casual seashore

acquaintance to whose marital infelicities Dearie had lent an unflagging ear, Dearie, lolling over some queer movie magazine, would be found at 11 a.m., hummingly munching pistachios and gigantic Italian chocolates. A month or so later, Eleanore, 'midst cretonne and bird's-eye maple, would be ministering to some sweet old retired actress: "Another sardine, Auntie? Cold slaw? . . . Oh, I'll go, Auntie!" And at such times, in delicatessen rig,—tan raincoat over nightgown, plus pink satin Louis Quatorzes,—Eleanore, dodging mud-slinging autos, slippering her way across the street to Winkler's for a little more of the potato salad, would give a characterization far more poignant than was ever any of the few slender parts she had essayed upon the stage.

So it was that Eleanore was at home anywhere and everywhere except at home. In this story, though,—or otherwise her evanescent addresses would race past you like houses glimpsed from a railway train,—we shall slow down only at one of her main stations: Dare's—Blanche Dare's. A grateful patron, this lady, whose social reputation would hardly list at more, say, than a generous 65 per cent in the market of Propriety. Let any one attempt to reduce that rating, however (as women sometimes will, you know), and oh, wonderfully, as Eleanore revealed the aching inside of the painted outside they had impugned, a tone there was, a tear in Eleanore's voice, that sent that scandal-scented lady almost up to par.

Is it any wonder, then, that this care-free, generous old road star would sing out: "Go to it, Dearie! I'm off for about six months now. I'll send along jack enough to keep the old shack running. And listen, Dearie, don't forget that the booze in the pantry's getting spuzzier every day!"

BUT if El sometimes did forget it, certainly none of the crowd ever did. Why, from hennaed, permanent-waved, perfected-eyebrowed heavies to the toughest little gum-chewing, bobbed-haired Hippodrome diver, everybody came to Dare's. Everybody telephoned. Everybody told her troubles as she borrowed, breakfasted, or imbibed.

And, late to-day, that same canny little intimate conclave of El's supporters, when they made their afternoon exit from Dare's convenient Broadway apartment hotel,—carrying, as usual, their loot of magazines and goodies,—their feminine farewells on a Forty-second Street corner were more than ordinarily prolonged.

"Well," Kitty Clover was saying, "if El Boone had to get out and hustle for a living, the way the rest of us do, she'd be heard from, with that charm of hers."

"Darned fine girl, El Boone!"—Cooper, blubbering over his banana,—"fines'—the fines' girl in—in—New—New Rochelle!"

"Well," said Vanne, "it certainly looks as if the finest girl in-in-in-in-New-New-New Mexico would have to do her hustling after this in some other agency than Fritz's."

But, at ten o'clock next morning, when Mr. J. Fritz Perkins was interred for the day in his revolving chair in his little air-tight private tomb-like office, opening his mail, the prolix and protracted narrative of a chubby young theatrical nobody seated by his unwashed window was suddenly left to wander on alone. There had arrived by special delivery one of the thickest and most expensively monogramed blue linen envelopes that Mr. Perkins had ever essayed to disembowel.

Leaning back in his swivel chair, he began to read it. Miss Nobody went right on talking. She didn't mind. She was used to it. They never listened, anyway. They were always reading letters or something. She even kept right on as he fiercely tore that letter across and across. But when she got to ". . . and oh, Mr. Perkins, the applause was simply deafening!" she stopped. Mr. Perkins was carefully patching the pieces of that blue letter together—rereading it:

> . . . and so, please, *please*, Fritz, don't turn me down, after all these years! We've been such good friends. You *must* see that I get to Meyers. Just *one* more chance, won't you, Fritz? Do let me come down and explain. Do, Fritz! Please, *please* ring me up!
>
> Your old friend always,
>
> E. BOONE.

NOW, there is a time when even a nobody knows enough to keep still. Mr. Perkins was looking half angry, half sad. There is a time when even a nobody knows enough to leave. Mr. Perkins was alone. Mr. Perkins had picked up the telephone. Mr. Perkins was ringing some one up. And as we, too, leave him for a while, he had a queer, unreadable expression. He was a queer, unreadable man. But the universal opinion agreed with Eleanore that he was "a good old scouto, Fritzo," even if the good Lord had finished him off with too many squirts of tabasco.

Always "going to get out of this rotten business next season," J. Fritz Perkins still remained in it, deeper than ever—business-soaked. Lean and lank and bleached with indoor air was Fritz. His language was bad, his profanity worse. On the surface, he was a typical theatrical agent. To experienced engagement-seekers, however—those who waited in agencies till marshmallow noses were powdered till they were sore, waited while uneasy fingers twisted derbies till they were slippery, leaned on canes till they were permanently bent—he might, J. Fritz Perkins, have been called eccentric.

It was not his custom, for instance, to admit a fair favorite into his private office and keep her there for an hour or two, three hours, keep her giggling protests till the crowd in the waiting-room murmured, exchanging knowing winks and smiles. Nor did the Perkins arm often carelessly wander about the slender waists of innocent ingénues. Unsophisticated aspirants were seldom asked to read the part of *Juliet;* or, if they were, 'twas never in the fifth-floor room of an ambiguous hotel, with the key turned in the lock. No ambitious actress's resistance did he ever break down by long, long months of specious promises.

No; J. Fritz Perkins did a straight business. Whenever an actress did succeed in disappearing into his private office, Fritz's patiently waiting flock took it for granted that she was merely embroidering her stage biography—or, peradventure, being boringly regaled with ancient tales of how Fritz had of yore so marvelously interpreted the *Ghost* in "Hamlet." They knew that, within a decent interval, said young woman would emerge, smiling and shooting her eyes at Fritz, to push, chin up, bust forward, through the weary, listless crowd.

INTO this stagnant scene, *clickety-click*, *click*, *click*, where a withering, coifed stenographer click-clicked "Thank heavens, I'm not one of you!" there trailed, that afternoon, a tall and languid lady, the elegance of whose shimmering, fringed, old-rose

charmeuse was worn with the serene insouciance of a drowsy queen about to be beheaded.

"For the love o' jazz, will you look at Boone!" A fuzzy brunette elbowed a silky, sulky blonde. "Why, say, look-a-here—ain't them the togs Blanche Dare wore in—what *was* that show, now? In the second act of—you know, flopped a couple o' seasons back, at the—gee whizz, ain't it spotted!"

Miss Boone was over by the window now. She had joined one of those heroic little agency groups that fight the never-ending battle of egotism.

"Say, listen!" said silky, sulky blonde to fuzzy brunette, "if Boone ain't found some new boob to talk *Muggsy* to again! 'When I played *Muggsy*'—'the hit I made in *Muggsy*'—say, just listen to her, will you? Some critic said her *Muggsy!* Why, good gosh, she's been handin' out that *Muggsy* dope ever since—"

"When did she play *Muggsy*, anyway? Heavens, that 'Red Lights' production must have been 'way back in the days of 'Ingomar' and 'The Lady of Lyons'! Nothing but a character bit, anyway, her *Muggsy*, wasn't it?"

"Sure. And she's been livin' off it for years." Sulky blonde still watched her. "Say, can you beat chewed-up ermine for bumness?"

"Cost a lot o' money, though, in its day."

" 'Its' is correct. Care for them red earrings with old rose?"

And as Eleanore, clutching her punctured gold-mesh bag (with three topazes gone), at last lazily begpardoned her way over to address the stenographer, fuzzy brunette, about to jump for that place in the back where four hooks shirked their duty, was jerked back by silky, sulky blonde.

"Oh, don't bother her! Gosh, she's that way all the time. She don't care. Say, look at her walk right into his office, will you! And us poor zephyrs sittin' outside here for three solid hours!"

BUT even those who reached the more private side of Mr. Perkins's door were not always the happiest people in the world. Eleanore's courageous-cheery "Hello, Fritz!" was answered only by a vigorous *bang-flap! bang-flap!* as Mr. Perkins, apparently oblivious of everything about him, kept right on at his desk, rubber-stamping a pyramid of typewritten letters. *Bang-flap! Bang-flap!*

"Awfully good of you, Fritz, to 'phone me and let me come down and—"

Bang-flap! Bang-flap! Slam! went a desk drawer shut.

Nervously fearful of this irate taciturnity, Eleanore at length found herself wanderingly, uneasily inspecting faces—oh, the silly, silly faces that filled the room! Photographs—photographs! Photographs, in that little theatrical cosmos, multitudinously swarmed. *Bang-flap!* In the limbo of the desk's confusion hopelessly, grievously they huddled, dust to dust. Despairingly they dropped, lost, into the waste-basket's untidy hell. *Bang-flap!* Or, judged and chosen and saved, they mounted in smirking bliss to the dirty heaven of the office walls. *Bang-flap! Bang-flap!*

Just one minute longer, now, and she'd walk right out of that office! She didn't intend to stand for any such treatment. From Fritz's desk a low, sizzling whistle, falsely debonair, had now set in. That settled it! Eleanore had, in fact, taken her first step homeward, when, with a little cry, she whirled. A miracle had happened. From the old, tired, blighted waste-basket, curiously, she brought up something.

"Why! Why, Fritz, what *is* this?"

Without looking up: "Aw, chuck it back!" *Bang-flap!* "What d'you s'pose it is? Some damfool actor, of course. Why, I'm so overrun with these confounded photographs I ought to send for an exterminator." *Bang-flap!* "Like bugs in this office, they are—conceited loafers!"

He stopped, spellbound—stared. "Well, I'll be switched! How the devil did that ever get—"

Before his eyes, ladies and gentlemen, was now triumphantly displayed a large and noble photograph—even the portrait of J. Fritz Perkins as the *Ghost* in "Hamlet." And as he sank back in his chair, over the back of it Eleanore seemed to settle with him. . . . His snowy silk handkerchief brushing off that glossy photograph . . . so carefully . . . so lovingly . . .

"That's a great photograph, eh, Eleanore?"

Scenes, great scenes like this, night after night are lost on the stage by the stupid speaking of lines too soon, too late. Eleanore knew that this was a slow cue.

"Isn't it an awful shame, Fritz," she breathed, "that you have to keep on in this business, with all your talent?"

Presto! Never from any seed was flower begot so quickly. "Sit down, Eleanore. Sit right down here. Sit— *Talent!*" Fritz leaned back luxuriously. "Talent! Why, Eleanore," meditatively he tapped a large gold tooth, "Eleanore, I've told you what old Timothy Worr, of the old Red Opera House, said about my *Ghost*, haven't I?"

Fritz had. Fritz certainly had. But to-day that time-worn tale was new and refreshingly welcome.

"Why, Eleanore—he said, Worr did—that he'd never—that— Confound those people!" Tempestuously he whirled to his feet, yanked open the door. "See here! I won't have people rapping on my door like this! I'm busy this afternoon—busy! Miss Oakes, can't you see that I'm not disturbed?" The door banged. "Yes, sir, Eleanore," swinging back to his chair, "Worr said he'd never seen a cleverer *Ghost* in his en-tire theatrical experience. Neat. Sure-footed. Crisp technique. A solid performance. 'Perkins,' he used to grab my arm, you know, in the wings, 'how the devil d'you ever get them effects?' Jewels! Jewels, Eleanore, that's what he said I had in my voice—real jewels!" A raspberry gumdrop popped into Mr. Perkins's mouth.

"Oh, I know, I know, Fritz—why, Fritz—Fritz, you know—oh dear, when 'Red Lights' played Memphis, you know a critic said that my creation of *Muggsy*—he said I gave the most arresting performance that he had—"

"Jewels, Eleanore! Real jewels!"

"I know it, Fritz; and this critic said that the way I smoked that corncob pipe in the opium-den scene—why, he said—he said, Fritz, that—"

"Yes, sir, Worr was a great man! Why, Eleanore, he used to say that with my ability—"

"The way I smoked that pipe, Fritz, this critic said that—"

Oh, how good it was to be back to the good old shop-talk camaraderie—back to the good old *Ghost*—back, back to *Muggsy!*

"Yes, sir, Eleanore, one of the cleverest— Oh, sit down—sit down, Eleanore! Why, it's early yet."

But it was late—oh, it was very, very late that afternoon—when silky, sulky blonde whispered to

fuzzy brunette: "Say, look! Boone's got a letter. Bet it's to Meyers. And us zephyrs sittin' out here another hour!"

Another hour! Where do they come from, those mysterious creatures who sit, day after day in theatrical agencies, another hour—another hour? Like the telephone, the stenographer, the rattling window-curtain, rain or shine, they are always present, waiting—waiting another hour—"Leave your address"—another hour—"You might call in Thursday."

And then it's Monday again—and then it's Friday— and then it's "Say, what day *is* this, anyway? My goodness, another whole week gone since Perkins promised us—"

And then one day, one dark, threatening afternoon, it's "Say, look, will you! Swell raincoat Boone's got on to-day, all right! That Burgundy shade was all the rage last year. They say she entertains something elegant. Gee, I wisht we could—"

"For heaven's sakes!" says fuzzy brunette to silky, sulky blonde, "did you see that left side of her coat there when Boone got up? Ain't that a shame, though—all over ink! Say, she's going to get the very devil for rapping on his door like that!"

But instead, to-day, as the door closed behind her, Mr. Perkins gave birth to an inordinately cordial smile. "Well, Eleanore, did you see him?"

Eleanore came up to him with a brave face. "Here, Fritzo, let me put this in your buttonhole."

"What is it? Oh, no, no, Eleanore! Why, I haven't worn a posy in my buttonhole since I courted my wife! See Meyers?"

Outside, ominous clouds were gathering, dark in the heavens, as dark as Eleanore's fears of the coming storm inside. Oh, how many times she had entered that office with trembling knees!

"Why, yes, Fritz—that is—"

"What did he say?"

"Well—I mean I went, Fritz, but—"

"But what?" Fritz slammed a drawer shut—locked it.

"Why, I don't know, Fritz—but the fact is—why, you see—I didn't think I could hardly afford to take that part, Fritz—with my reputation—after *Muggsy*, you know—you see, it was on the road, and—"

"Holy cats!" Fritz's fist struck the desk with a bang that upset the mucilage. "Didn't we thrash that all out already? Hell's bells! *Hell*—hello! Hello!" He had grabbed the telephone. "Yes, yes, this is Perkins speaking. . . . Oh, that you, Meyers?"

Meyers! Good heavens—Meyers on the 'phone! Eleanore's heart stood still. The day had grown swiftly darker. And now there was a distant, muttering rumble.

"What? What's that? . . . You—you didn't see her—Miss Boone? . . . What? . . . Who? . . . Why, I never sent any girl of that name to you! I sent Miss Boone — Eleanore Boone. . . . What? . . . Why, that girl must have come from Mooney's or Clark—good heavens! . . . All right, Meyers, I'll look into it. . . . 'By!"

"But, Fritz, it meant so much to her!"

"*Her!* Jumping cats of Jericho! Her! Her? By cripes, you've gone and done it again, Eleanore Boone!" He snatched up a photograph of a low-necked smirker, hieroglyphed "Yours lovingly, Lulu Gobbe." Into the air it sailed, over the towel-draped screen, and landed on a wet cake of soap.

"Have you got the perpendicular nerve, Eleanore Boone, to come in here after all I've done for you and tell me you've let go of another part again?"

"Why, her whole future was at stake, Fritz!—reputation—and everything! It was her only chance, and—"

"Damn her chance! Where the dickens's my commission? Jumping cats of Jericho! Didn't I go out of my way to get Meyers to dinner the other night at the Eagles? Why, I had him all fixed for you. Good Godfrey, Eleanore, you got no more gratitude than a pink rattlesnake!"

"But let me tell you, Fritz—I—"

"No, sir; when I'm through, I'm through!" And with a vindictive rubber stamp Fritz began to *bang-flap* his pile of typewritten letters.

"Aw, but, Fritzo—"

"Perkins is my name. Take those paws off!" *Bang-flap!* "I'm busy. And get this, Miss Boone," fiercely he shook his fountain-pen at her, "I never want to see you again in this office so long as I live!"

"Aw, Fritz!"

It was now as dark as night in the room. Savagely Fritz snapped on an electric light and began to wipe the ink off his fingers with his white silk handkerchief. "Good-by! Didn't you hear me say I was busy? You'll have to excuse *me*, Miss Boone."

Foot-fretful, fidgety fingers twiddling a dangling glove-button, Eleanore snailed on, finally, toward the door.

"But I—wait till I tell you, Fritz, what really happened. Here's the honest truth about it—"

"Truth! What d'you mean truth?" Into Fritz's eyes there came a strange glitter. "Say—wait a minute! Meyers didn't get fresh with you or anything, did he? By cripes, if I thought he'd tried any funny business, I—"

"Oh, no, no, no! Sit down, Fritz! Sit down!"

"Well, I know these managers! Why, there was one up here on—why, just the other day, a girl—"

"Oh, no, Fritz—no, nothing like that, I give you my word. It was only—"

BUT Fritz's mind, for the moment oddly bent in this direction, seemed scarcely to realize at first that Eleanore was already telling him about that pretty girl from the country, and the usual rich, easy-going, good-natured philanderer. Presents too often accepted. Room rent and board bill advanced when she was at her wit's end to pay. A too-affectionate comradeship—ready to give her almost anything except a marriage certificate, which she needed more than anything else. And at home, rumors rife; gray hairs being brought down in sorrow to the grave.

"You know, after all, Fritz," Eleanore concluded, "it takes a woman to understand a woman."

"Well, it takes J. Fritz Perkins to understand that kind of a story!" Fritz pushed her hands off his desk. "Who took my knife?"

"But don't you see, Fritz," Eleanore put those hands back on the desk, "if this girl gets back on the stage and is seen by the public—applauded and all—he'd be much more likely to marry her, and—"

"I don't know what the devil you're talking about, Eleanore. I only know I give no Advice to the Lovelorn."

"Fritz, it meant that girl's honor—her father's life, perhaps. And—and I'm much better off than she—I've got a home, and—oh, what could I do, Fritz? What could—"

"Do?" Fritz whirled on her. "You could have looked out for yourself! For me! Say, what the pea-green hades d'you think I'm in business for, any-

way? How d'you expect me to support a wife and kids? Why, see here! Last year didn't I get you to Tom Merrimac? Didn't you come back here with a bunch of charity flim-flam? *Some*body was down and out. All I know is, I lost my commission—forty dollars. Then, just last month I sent you to Updyke. What happened? Let yourself be bamboozled out of another fine engagement by one of the cheesiest fakirs in the profession. Here I am up against Clark and Mooney in this rotten business, trying to make an honest living and get the name of running the most reliable agency in town. And now you not only go and queer my reputation with managers, but you lose me another fat commission. Why, I could have sent dozens of girls for that part!"

Eleanore was now by the window. The rain was coming down in torrents. "You see, Fritz, you don't know what an aching heart is."

Fritz kicked the waste-basket to one side. "Well, I know what an aching pocket-book is!" Glumly he sat sharpening a lead-pencil, more and more,—one of those protracted moments it was when you keep right on sharpening, more and more and more,—until, disgusted, he flung the stump across the table and whirled round in his chair.

"Oh, well, I don't want you going out of this here office crying." (Fritz's eyes—watching her falter on toward the door.) "I like you, Eleanore; hang it all, I've always liked you. Oh, you can't go out in a storm like this. But I declare I don't see why I let you bamboozle me this way!"

He came up to her. "Why, Eleanore, don't you know this is a cutthroat proposition, this stage game? You're never going to accomplish anything until you get rid of that heart of yours. Happen to know of a single successful actress to-day, Miss Boone, who hasn't got to the top except by climbing over other people's shoulders? Never mind other people's troubles. Look out for yourself. Let 'em all go to the— Suffering *snakes!*"

A blinding blast of lightning-thunder flared-crashed into the room. Terrified, Eleanore had jumped to Fritz's arms.

"Here, here! Go easy there, Eleanore—easy now! Mrs. P. is looking right at you. Easy!" From the desk he picked up a little silver-framed photograph. He tapped it theatrically. "Yes, sir, this little woman's done a lot of good work in this here little office, Eleanore. Whenever they try for a close-up—that whiney vamp stuff—'Aw, now, Mr. Perkins!' and pull that 'Old Darling' business—why, I just point there at Mrs. P."

And something there was in his slowish wink, in collaboration with the complacent way he bit into a fat lemon gumdrop, that made Eleanore reach out rather pointedly for her raincoat and umbrella.

"Oh, no, not yet, Eleanore! Nobody waiting outside such a day as this." And as he wandered lazily out into the outer office to make sure, he tossed carelessly into her lap the picture of his three boys. "There! See what you think of *them*."

And when that door again opened, Mr. Perkins's care-free whistling ceased abruptly.

"Why—why, Eleanore! Why, my dear girl!" Puzzled, he swung back into his swivel chair. "Why, what—what is the matter?"

"Oh, I don't often lose control of myself, Fritz, but—oh, I'll be all right in a minute. It's nothing, only—only that—"

"Why, Eleanore!"

"Why, you see, Fritz, I—oh, I never talk about it, Fritz—why, I never even told any of the girls—but—Fritz, I've been married. I've had three children, too, and—and—"

From her tarnished steely-beaded bag he watched her jerking out a lacy, torn handkerchief. "Oh, it was just something about their little caps and everything. It just seemed to—to—oh, it brought it all back to me, you know, and—"

A married hand had closed over hers. And now, while our Fritz may not have had all the genius attributed to him by old Timothy Worr, still many an actor has worked, and worked in vain, for that inflection when he asked—"Dead?"

She nodded. "My—my husband—and my—my—oh, Fritz! In a fire, it was. All of them—all—"

The rain slashed at the windows. And, at this tense moment, had this little scene been played on the stage, you probably would have caught the first low, haunting strains from the "Tales of Hoffman"—you know—where he presses and presses her hand. . . . But, as she went on, trying to tell him of her happy youth, her pretty Southern home, her happy marriage, and how finally she came on here to New York, that hand was pressed, pressed, pressed, until—well, it was the lady, this time, who (dare we say revengefully?) was pointing a warning finger at Mrs. P. Smiling Mrs. P., whose gentle, pleasant face mutely changed their inchoate little poem into prose. Telephone prose. Rubber-stamp, *bang-flap* prose. Hard, practical, business prose.

". . . You see, Fritz—you see, if—why, if I could only get a chance with Stork, say, or somebody like—"

"Well, my dear lady, haven't I always given you a chance with the best of 'em?"

"Yes; but, Fritz, I don't want to go 'way out to—why, with my reputation as *Muggsy*, you know, I—"

"Oh, I know! Why, after my hit at the old Red Opera House, I know I never wanted to leave New—*Hello!* Hello!" He had jerked up the telephone. "What? . . . Who? . . .Oh, yes! Well, well! How are you?" Excitedly he muffled the transmitter and whispered, "It's Stork!"

". . . Yes. . . . Yes, you bet I do, Stork! . . . Yes, sir, I've got just the girl for the part! . . . What's that? . . . Why-uh, no doll, of course; but—yes—why, yes, Stork, I'd call her beautiful. . . . Oh, you bet she has—all kinds of pathos. . . . O—h, thirty, say—young thirty. . . . All right, Stork, fine! . . . All right."

And almost before the receiver struck the hook, Fritz was shouting, "Jimminy, what a stroke of luck! Chance of your life, Eleanore—classiest production of the season. Stork will see you at the Onyx Hotel to-morrow at five sharp."

And now, as he conducted her to the door, it was Mr. Perkins, the agent, who spoke: "And get this straight, now! As you value my friendship, Eleanore Boone, you'll take care that nothing happens *this* time!"

II

IN that coruscating, perfervid, ever-crowding, crowded Broadway plaisance, so audaciously usurping the very heart of the great metropolis, rollicking up block after block after sparkling block, till at last, East, West, West, East, overflowing, riotously scintillant, it has come to electrify the streets even of those once somnolent Forties, the lay Manhattanite, hustled along in his theater taxi, knows really little more of its technical mysteries than does the rustic who, gaping, transported, un-

thinkingly accepts a modern miracle, dazzlingly accomplished.

Then You come tripping along on your high heels—you who belong to a more sapient fraternity—you of the Stage. Familiarly you breathe that excitement-spiced Rialto air. And you know that every manager, agent, playwright, or actor—yea, down to even the greenest little extra girl, or the electrician who set that last light in the star's bright name—sees that this gorgeous Broadway monstrosity merely externalizes the infinite multiplication of one simple little act—Waiting!

Waiting. Waiting for the play to be written. Rewritten. Waiting for that show to close to get a theater. Waiting for that wonderful character actress to be released. The costumes—the scenery—that telegram—waiting! Waiting and waiting for Johnnie to hurry back with those three-inch screws. Waiting—waiting—

"Well, holy cats!" boomed J. Fritz Perkins over his hard-worked telephone. "Why, I been a-waiting here now for over three weeks to hear from her! . . . What? What's that? . . . Well, when did Miss Boone leave Miss Dare's? . . . Well, I don't see why the devil you can't let me have her address!" Smash! went the receiver back on its hook. **"Damn!"**

THE Crowd, though, were not in the least surprised that El was keeping away from the Perkins agency. They weren't surprised even that—that gay holiday afternoon when sweet old Father and Mother Dare motored 'way, 'way down from Meriden and pleaded with Dearie to go to the matinée with them—Dearie decided to "take a chance." They knew she'd probably miss that five o'clock appointment with Stork. Wasn't her name Eleanore Boone? Do people with round shoulders suddenly straighten up—walk off erect?

But, after all, most of Dearie's friends were but little interested in Dearie's business activities. What mainly interested them was Dearie's social vicissitudes. Where did Dearie now happen to be living? What did Dearie have to offer them? For when Good Old Boone was "on the jitney," and her life had slowed down to crackers-and-milk in a little back seven-a-week, where, as now, she rocked, and glossed her nails, and rocked, and looked out on those sagging, blowing, beflanneled clothes-lines, the Crowd (for hall bedrooms and hard chairs and warm faucet water will test friendship sometimes) were apt, after a long, leg-aching day of agency-chasing, to seek either Kit Clover's sunnier, more comfortable, chintzy, bird-singing little haven of rest, or just drop in at Vanne's for a "cig" and hear "the news."

The news to-day, though, was served to them crackling hot, like roasted chestnuts, right on the corner of Forty-first Street.

"Well," said Vanne Burke, "I had no idea Fritz Perkins would ever dare to actually lay hands on El! Of course I always knew he had the very devil of a temper, but—wait till I tell you!" and Vanne herded the avid, excited crowd into an open doorway.

"Why, you see, fellers, El's been putting it off, putting it off for weeks, seeing Fritz. But yesterday afternoon, late it was, she finally blew in there for what was probably her farewell performance in the Perkins agency. And according to those two fuzzies—you fellers all know those two little rats that are always hanging round there at Fritz's—it certainly must have been some show! Oh, he acted up like a wild bull, they told me. Wouldn't listen to a word she said. Just hustled El right out of his office by one arm. Kept yelling at her, 'I take no more explanations, Miss Boone! I'm through! D'you hear? Through!' And finally, when El began to cry, he ups and grabs her by the shoulders—slings her right out into the hall—*bing!* Slams the door on her. Regular rough-house stuff, it was. And listen here, fellers, when those two fuzzies left, the elevator-boy told 'em that El had fallen down that first little flight of stairs—you know, outside there—and he had to get her a taxi. And—and, girls—she went home in a taxi!"

"Well, that—that brute! I'm going right over there and—and give that feller Perkins—"

"Oh, shut up! Why, Cooper, El would probably be furious if she thought any of the crowd were talking around town about it."

"Lovely girl, El Boone—per-fec-ly lovely. . . . She—she was ve-ry—"

"Oh, shut up, Cooper! You're drunk."

"Ve-ry, ve-ry nice to me, ladies—ladies, I was ve-ry, ve-ry sick once, and she—she—"

"Oh, Cooper!"

"And she—she—say, Kitty, you tell 'em—you—"

But in her forthright, dynamic way, Kitty Clover was already telling them. "It's the friends of Eleanore Boone that have been the ruination of her!" she declared. "The idea of her going off to a matinée, that day!"

"Aw, but, Kit! You know how nice the old Dares were to El when she had pneumonia that time, down on their farm. And, Kit, you know they simply insisted!"

"Friends! Friends!" shrugged Kitty Clover. "They *always* insist!"

"Aw, but, Kit! El would have made it all right, at that, if old lady Dare hadn't lost her hat-pin in that dark old box. And then, darned if the old gent didn't buttonhole El and make her listen to the very end of a long, dull—"

"Friends! Friends! They're *always* buttonholing you!"

"Well, it wasn't her fault, Kit, was it, that she couldn't find a taxi? And, at that, she only missed Stork by just—"

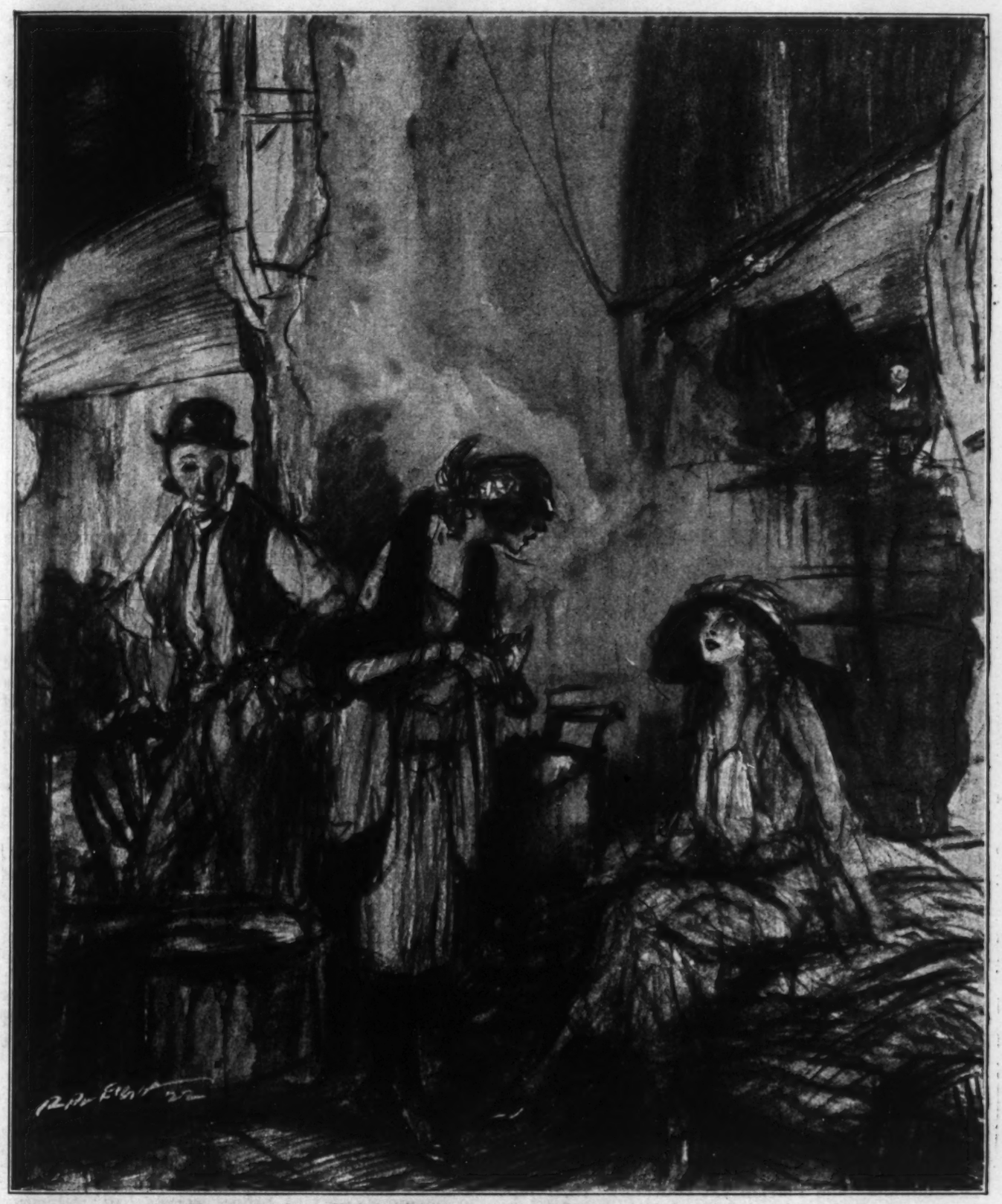
"Oh, the poor, blessed dear!" It was a dry, thin-lipped Myrtle caparisoned in El's own yellow fox set (borrowed, weeks ago, to see a movie director in), who now cut in with her sympathy. "Well, I think I'll go on up and see Boone right away. Come on, Bertie, don't you want to go along? You've never seen Blanche Dare's apartment yet, you know. Why, it's the grandest—"

The information vouchsafed as to the "poor blessed dear's" present humble abode, however, seemed to cause the long brown glove that friend Myrtle was coaxing up her arm to move a little more sluggishly. "Oh—is she, really? Well, then, give her my love, will you, Kit?" And, as she wandered away, "And tell her that if there's anything I can possibly do for her, to be sure and let me know!"

But that evening two girls who knew just what to do with no one to let them know—who had found Eleanore Boone just as wonderful when receiving as when giving, just as beautiful in a lodging-house on West Twenty-second Street as in a Park Avenue palace—made their way up those steep, hazardously steep flights of cabbage-scented linoleum stairs.

And when they came away, those two girls, as they strolled thoughtfully up the street, Vanne's sudden, queer little laugh terminated in:

"Why, the whole thing is, don't you see, Kit, El's



Vanne Burke pulled the Original aside. "Oh, say, El, heard the news?"

dead struck on Fritz. All that talk she got off was only her trying to shield him. Banana peel!—why, that story about her slipping in the street didn't get over with me for a second!"

And as the absorbed Kitty made no reply, Vanne went on, sympathetically lamenting that terrible room El was in. That red rose—that one lonely rose of Lurie Cooper's drooping out of that awful, cracked water pitcher — pitiful, sort of — and wasn't it too bad El couldn't be up at that Mrs. What's-her-name's on Riverside, now, in that lovely big bay-window there — "You know, Kit, where she could watch the ships all come up the river!"

"No!" at last flashed back the brittle little Kit. "What El Boone needs is to stay right where she is and watch out and see that her own ship comes in! And I want to tell you right now, Vanne Burke, that so long as El's not seriously hurt, I'm rather glad the whole thing happened. This row with Fritz may keep her from hanging round the Perkins agency all the time. Perhaps she'll brace up now and accept some of the offers she's had for the road. Why, with that charm of hers—oh, I'll get after her, sometime, and make something of her, see if I don't!"

But why need Vanne have worried about old cotton towels or blurred mirrors or heaven-deliver-us-from-that bedquilt! Wasn't that blessed lodger's name Dearie? Didn't she carry, wherever she roamed, her magic carpet, ever, ever ready to waft her away? One month—two months—and then, one merry morning, as cooling Broadway breezes bestirred silky-lacy hangings in Blanche Dare's *pimpante* French blue-and-gray *chambre-à-coucher*, Emma—Blanche Dare's housekeeper—black-haired Emma, Irishly joyous—was assisting in the unpacking of a familiar old battered black trunk; the while its loquacious owner hung away her greens, and cocoa-browns, and her terra-cotta things, and things, and things, till Dare's cedar-scented armoire might have passed for a Sixth Avenue Madame Redewski's show-case of exclusive, sacrificial hand-me-downs.

". . . and believe me, Emma, I certainly was surprised when Miss Dare up and sailed for Paris, last week!"

Eleanore Boone—before a tall, a welcomely tall cheval glass, lazily twisting a silvery sash about her far-from-voluptuous hips; and Emma, after hooking away at something on the shoulder, hurriedly (for the ringing, ringing of bells was already proclaiming it to be a gala afternoon) stepping back, hands up, to pronounce it one of the grandest gowns yet that Miss Dare had ever left behind!

BUT really, Eleanore, you know, didn't want to bask in Dare's borrowed magnificence. She didn't really care to be reinvested as Hostess Extraordinary and Patron Plenipotentiary to a court of idle Thespians. To have stayed right on where the dirty old pink roses in the old dirty match-scratched wall-paper grew grimier every day was what she would have preferred—where dreaming and relaxation brought real luxury. The luxury of turning a key in the lock—alone! Where, at night, in that little gas-fluttering bedroom, alone, all alone, she could open the old black trunk—pull them out—her photographs—those precious, hidden things—where she could look at them as long as she wanted to. Her boys—her three boys— As long as she wanted to—alone.

Oh, little the crowd knew, this riotously effervescent afternoon, as salad youth and musty age turned Blanche Dare's spacious drawing-rooms into a carnival of laughter and Broadway gossip (trust Vanne Burke to have spread the news!), as they grabbed fluted chocolates, fat, sugary violets, as they squirreled away at nuts, sampled luscious tinfoiled enigmas and toothsome so-forths, little they knew the real Eleanore—Eleanore of the sad gray eyes!

Eleanore—Eleanore Boone re-enthroned—languescent upon that pink-and-gold chaise-longue, a lassitudinous blue Persian cat couchant in her lap! One turquoise-braceleted arm wreathed indolently over the top of her dun blonde head. Good Old Boone, seedy and serene, in brick-red Georgette and something green hanging, once more holding her little salon like a far, far distant cousin of Madame Récamier. And what though the elegance of that steely-beaded gown, all a-glitter, aglow under the prismatic crystal chandelier, was somewhat frazzled and cigarette-scorched? Never mind—inside its reefed waist did it not still bear the rancid white satin label of the Rue de la Paix?

And those feet! Lo, worshiping at those dingy red velvet, rhinestoned feet, what breath of pure, pulsating, dramatic-school virginity was this? "Oh, Miss Boone! Miss Boone! Oh—you must have been perfectly *dar*-ling as *Muggsy!*"

A stir. There was a sinister stir in that room. What!—what was that—*Muggsy?* The old-timers had pricked up their ears. *Muggsy!* Was this festive afternoon to be jeoparded by a little Miss Blue-eyed Innocence?

Eleanore had just risen to take the silver cocktail-shaker from Emma's overladen tray. And when, expansively, she turned back to her chaise-longue,—click-swash, click-swashing what that Memphis critic had said about the way she had smoked that corncob pipe,—it was to behold her bewildered young victim being spirited off to a remote zone of safety, where, on a sinky, brocaded divan, a dangerous little rosebud mouth could be stuffed so full of breath-taking goodies that larger, louder mouths might open for a defensive barrage of jabber-gabble.

"And say, El—listen! Did Ollie tell you, El, I ran right into Fritz Perkins down to Atlantic City last Sunday?"

There was now another ominous stir in the room. A new, a direr peril had reared its head. For, in Eleanore's aulic circle, these days, as you may imagine, the name of Fritz Perkins had long been tabu. Yet, in spite of all friendly attempts by the crowd to silence that big California mouth, it went right on spouting like a cathedral gargoyle:

"Oh, say, listen, El, won't you! Rolling right along in a wheel-chair on the Boardwalk with his wife, he was, large as life—ha, ha, ha—and say, El—"

But El wasn't laughing. She was clear across the room now. From allegro her silver cocktail-shaker was click-swashing up to presto. Weaving in and out amongst the nestling nibblers on satin damask, *click-swash, click-swash* (cocktails flowing, flowing), on luxi-cushioned couches (cigarettes glowing, cigarettes going), one heard her would-be nonchalant "Oh yes, have another, Cooper, do!"—and "Try one of those pink ones there, Myrtle dear!"

"El Boone, will you listen? Did you hear that, El, what I just said? Why, Fritz said Mrs. Perkins wasn't very well—had a cold or something, and so Fritz—oh, *El!*"

And then, although the Old Guard had closed in on her, she kept right on protesting in a hoarse whisper, almost as loud as before, that she didn't care what any one had to say, why, she had found the Perkinses *most* cordial about El, and Fritz had told her he hadn't ever heard a word about El's being hurt or anything.

Her full-moon eyes, at this painful moment, were speculatively brooding upon El—poor old El. Suspiciously they began to glitter. And then, whether from mere nervousness at her rebuke it was, or that inordinate desire so many women of her type seem to have for thinking aloud, anyway, if that irrepressible old barn-stormer didn't call out again: "Say, hold still there, Dearie! Well, no wonder I been a-starin' at you all the afternoon!" And, dashing across the room, she snatched up one of El's floating draperies, to display, triumphantly, a nineteen-inch slash, sewed up with a little drunken procession of baby safety-pins.

"There! I knew it, I knew it!" she bellowed. And, with all the abandon of her past "Camille"-"East Lynne" days, she proceeded to demonstrate how Dare had *z-z-zipped* that very dress on a nail, one afternoon in 'Frisco Stock, makin' one o' them flourishy exits o' hers. "And listen, folks! Out front—me—laughin' like a wild hyena: 'El'll get it!

El'll get that dress!' says I—laughin' an' applaudin'—'sure's you live, El'll get it, El'll get it, El'll—'"

Even El herself was laughing now. And then, all at once, they all stopped. A hush held the room. Down the hallway a joyous, joyous voice was echoing, "El'll get it, El'll get it! You bet your life El'll get it!" and the next instant, like a newsboy crying an extra, the rantipole Vanne Burke charged into the room.

Breathless she was,—taxicab sizzling at the door,—on her way to Hartford Stock—but she just *had* to run up. "Gee, ain't it great, fellers!" she cried. "Why, when I first heard of it in Saxe Bunner's office this afternoon, you could have knocked me over with a powder-puff!" She flopped into a chair. She grabbed a cigarette. "Why, I—" But before she had really lighted it she caught the puzzled stare of the crowd. She, too, stared. "Why!" she exclaimed. She jumped to her feet. "Why, haven't you heard the news? Well, what on earth are you yelling 'El'll get it!' for, then, if you haven't heard—" Exultantly she whirled, face illumined.

"*Muggsy!*" she cried, and her voice broke. "Eleanore! For heaven's sake, didn't you know there's to be a revival of 'Red Lights'?"

SILENCE. In that perfervid room, silence—a rare, rare happening amongst theatrical folk. Then, from the depths of an old Dutch chair, something awoke. Something stirred and mumbled:

"Aw, ladies—ladies! Such a noise! Aw, say, how d'you ever expect a feller to sleep?" The befuddled Cooper, shunting the blue Persian cat to the other shoulder. "Women! Always the way with a pack o' women! Aw, say, ladies! Why, sure she'll get it! El Boone'll get anything in this world, she will. Nice, nice pussy! 'Course she'll get it—won't she, pussy?"

The cat struck him. That cat should have struck him. He was a highly intelligent, blue-ribbon, theatrical cat; and, in his mystic, superior, nine-hundred-dollar Persian way, he knew about as much, probably, as the enthusiastic fools who chattered around him.

For, verily, even a fool should know that when any one, drunk or sober, ventures to predict who "will surely get the part," he hasn't learned very much about navigation upon the rough seas of theatrical disappointment. Wherefore, was there anything unusual in the fact that the next few days in Saxe Bunner's magnificent office were so squally that poor, storm-tossed Eleanore was to drift homeward flying signals of distress?

But we mustn't lose hope yet. There is usually a pilot, you know, to take the ship in over the bar and through devious, dangerous channels, while the captain rests below. And so Kitty Clover—who, you remember, had always longed to take command of that beloved, moss-grown derelict—was to be found, late one evening, disheveled from a long and bickering dress rehearsal, seated at the foot of the chaise-longue in that same salon, so absorbed in studying the reefs and shoals in a sad gray face that she was almost unconscious of a mournful whine from the doorway:

"Aw, now, Miss Boone! Not a bite did you get off'n that tray yet—an' me in from the movies already!"

"Oh, go on out, Emma, please, and—"

"Ain't that just like Miss Dare, though—layin' there on them pillers an' starin' up at—"

"Emma! Please!"

"Aw, this old theatrical business! Nine years it is now, Miss Clover, I been a-workin' for professional folks, an', honest to God, I ain't seen nothin' but tears, tears, tears!"

And as the silver tray swung grumblingly down the hallway, the Original *Muggsy* punched up a dragon-besprawled cushion, leaned back. "Oh, it wasn't so much Bunner's refusing me the part, Kit, that upset me so. After all, Kit, I'm not starving—I've got a home. And besides,"— a listless hand came up, adjusted a smart Parisian boudoir cap (only slightly coffee-stained),—"you know we can always manage to get through the big shocks of life somehow, don't you know—"

Kitty Clover was restless now; she was walking up and down the room.

"But it's—it's the little things, you know, Kit—the little— Oh, I know it's silly of me, Kit, but—oh, you know, this afternoon they all came here—oh, those girls!—and laughed, and talked, and talked—oh, the way they banged away on that piano, there, and—and—" Her hand reached out and caught up Kit's. "Why, Kit—Kit Clover—when I think of the way you came here to-night, so late—Kit, listen! You're the only one of the whole crowd that has asked one single word about *Muggsy*—did I get *Muggsy* or anything! Just you, Kit, and—and Cooper." She blew her nose. "And—and somehow Cooper—"

Kitty Clover exploded. "You're wrong, Eleanore, you're all wrong! It *isn't* the little things, it's only the big things of life that really count. It's *Muggsy!* You've simply got to get that part! You've got to get back to earning your own living, like the rest of us. Why, if you had only taken care of the big things—your theatrical career—all these years, you'd have found that these little two-cent friends of yours would all be asking about you, all right!" She stood before Eleanore, her red hair blazing. She was like a little, cold Napoleon. "Just let me ask you, Eleanore Boone, what any of these friends of yours, rich and poor, have ever really done for your career? Yes, even Blanche Dare!"

Deliberately Kitty took up a cigarette; deliberately she lighted it. Why, did El recall that time she told Dare about losing that bully Denver Stock engagement? Did El get any real sympathy? Didn't that smug face fairly beam? *Now* Dearie wouldn't have to go 'way off and leave her. *Now* she could still have Dearie's charm free to motor with. Giggle with. Go to Saratoga with. Linger longer, Eleanore!

Back to the chaise-longue came Kitty Clover. Sat down. "Eleanore, see here—did Blanche Dare ever once ask you how you were getting on with your work? Ever offer to help you, or anything? And would you, El, ever dare ask her?"

Bolt upright against that dragon-besprawled cushion now sat the Original *Muggsy;* a position, to be candid, that our languorous lady seldom assumed. "But, Kit. Why, you see, Kit, don't you know—"

"Yes," cried Kitty, "you bet I know! She *does* so much for you—she *gives* you so much! But, Eleanore Boone, why, when I think of the way you've waited on her, and all the bores you've entertained for her with your charm, and got her invited to your swell places with your charm, and lied her out of things when she was in bad, and didn't have charm enough of her own to square herself—"

"Oh, Kit!"

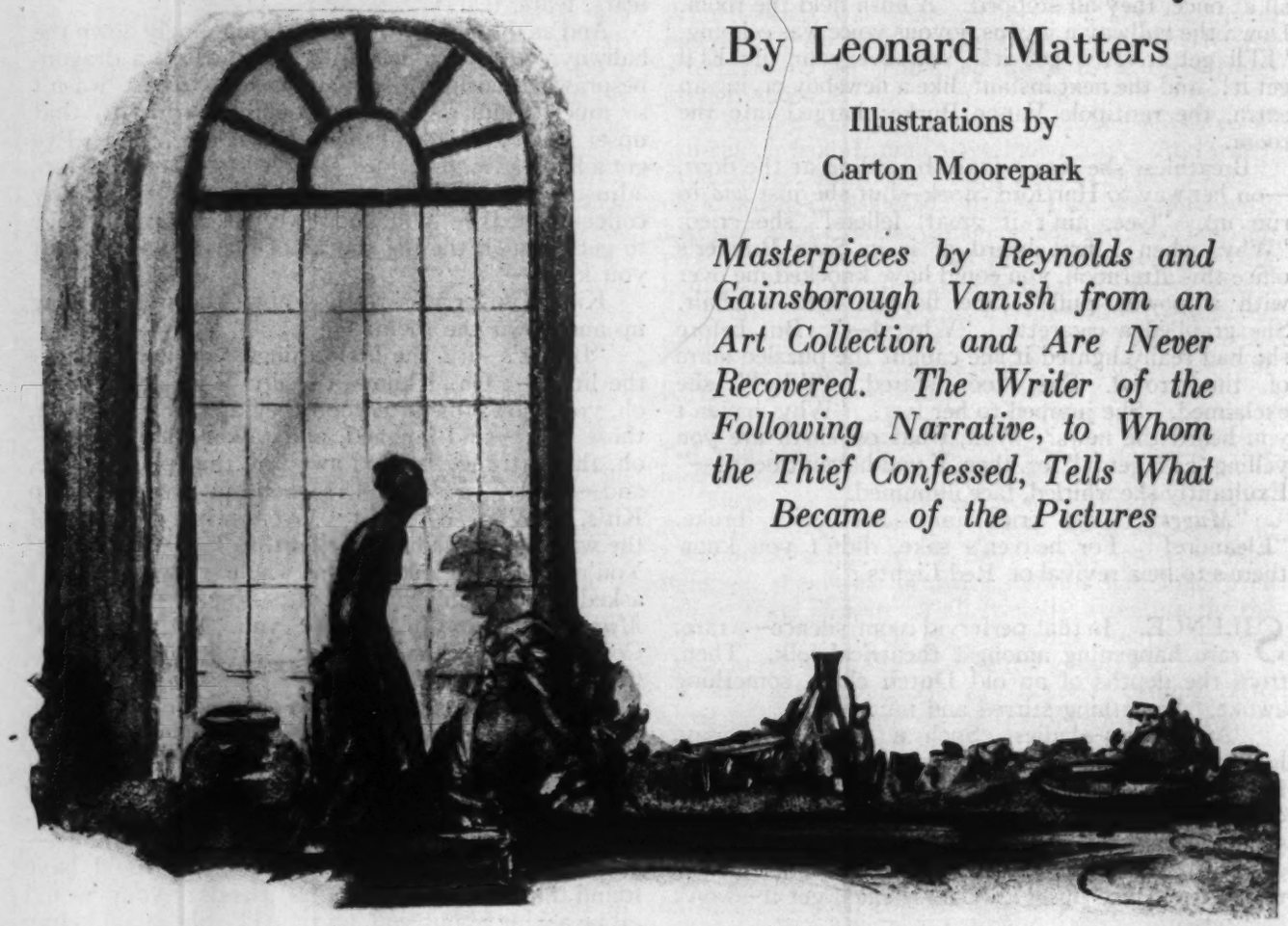
[*Continued on page 118*]

The Great Park Lane Robbery

By Leonard Matters

Illustrations by
Carton Moorepark

Masterpieces by Reynolds and Gainsborough Vanish from an Art Collection and Are Never Recovered. The Writer of the Following Narrative, to Whom the Thief Confessed, Tells What Became of the Pictures



The Author's Introduction

MR. WERTHEIMER was a retired Bond Street merchant, known to be enormously wealthy, and famous for his wonderful art collection. His house in Norfolk Street was supposed to be absolutely burglar-proof. An intricate system of burglar-alarms had been installed, and trusted servants were always on the premises, ready to guard his treasures, should the incredible happen and a thief succeed in gaining an entrance. Yet into this supposedly impregnable storehouse of treasure a man who was neither a desperate burglar nor an expert thief found his way one misty morning, with the aid of no other house-breaking tool than an ordinary table-knife.

In making his way out through the front door the thief set off the burglar-alarms, and roused the neighborhood to an uproar of excitement in the midst of which he escaped. With a package under his arm containing articles worth £37,000—one newspaper report said £60,000—"John Smith" crossed by Hyde Park, and then, in the company of a policeman who never suspected that he walked with a burglar, passed through a cordon of police, and on to his humble dwelling, where his wife and children were at the point of starvation.

The robbery was discovered almost at the instant it was committed. Mr. Wertheimer was summoned, and Mr. Berry, the custodian of his art gallery, was brought post-haste to Norfolk Street. Between them they took tally of the missing treasures. The best men from Scotland Yard were called in, and London rang with the story of the audacious crime. The newspapers devoted columns and columns to the affair. Here is the account that appeared in the London *Times* of February 13, 1907:

> A daring burglary was carried out yesterday morning at 21, Norfolk-street, Park-lane, the residence of Mr. Charles Wertheimer, the well-known connoisseur of pictures and *objets d'art*. The robber practically emptied a glass case containing snuff-boxes, and then went into the drawing-room, which faces Park-lane and which contains some very valuable pictures. Here he cut out from their frames the portraits of Nancy Parsons, by Gainsborough, and of the Hon. Mrs. Charles Yorke, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. . . .
>
> From his having left in the case from which he took the snuff-boxes an extraordinary *biberon* of the 13th century Italian workmanship, worth, probably, £20,000, it is inferred that the burglar was a novice. . . . He left untouched a show-case containing some 40 or 50 miniatures by Conway, Engleheart, and the Plinners, the diamond frames of which would have realized some £7,000 or £8,000.
>
> The burglar left the house at six o'clock, and in departing set going a burglar-alarm. The sound of the alarm caused the footmen to hurry downstairs, and on arriving on the scene of the robbery they found that the pictures had been taken away. They thereupon called Mr. Wertheimer, who discovered the real extent of the damage.
>
> The picture of Nancy Parsons was formerly the property of Lord Lansdowne, and was hung at Bodwood. His Lordship parted with it some ten years ago, when it was acquired for the collection of Count Boni de Castellane, of Paris, from whose possession it passed about three years ago into that of Mr. Wertheimer.

The portrait of Nancy Parsons, thirty-eight by twenty-four inches, was valued at £15,000. That of Mrs. Yorke, about the same size, was estimated to be

worth £6,000. To-day they would probably bring more than £50,000, judging by recent prices paid for Reynolds and Gainsborough portraits. It was not, however, the intrinsic value of these paintings that created such a stir. It was the knowledge that they were masterpieces, in a sense considered to be treasures of the nation. While in the possession of Mr. Wertheimer, who was never known to sell anything, they were looked upon as public property. Out of his hands, they might leave the country forever. That is actually what did become of them. These two gems of art have been lost to the world forever; and, until I disclose the strange story that has come to me, the secret of their destruction is known to only three other persons.

The disappearance of the pictures prompted the London newspapers to recall the stories of many similar robberies, the most famous being that of May 26, 1876, when Gainsborough's portrait of the Duchess of Devonshire was stolen from Messrs. Agnew's art gallery in Bond Street. This picture had been bought a few days before the robbery for £10,500. The thief was Adam Worth, one of the most remarkable criminals in history, a man who had an international organization of burglars, forgers, and counterfeiters, and who lived in London, posing as an American millionaire. Gainsborough's picture, which to-day would be worth £100,000, was absent from England for twenty-six years. Just before his death in England in 1902, Worth disclosed to the Pinkerton Detective Agency where the picture was hidden. He bargained for its return from the United States to Messrs. Agnew, and one of the conditions was that his two children should be financially provided for. This condition was accepted, and the promise was kept, the picture being duly returned to its rightful owners.

From the "Illustrated London News"

"Lady Playing a Guitar," by Jacques Dumont: one of the stolen miniatures

In the "Great Park Lane Robbery" it will be seen by what follows that much the same condition was attached to the return of Mr. Wertheimer's pictures. No direct bargain was struck, but in return for information that led to the conviction of one receiver who actually had some of Mr. Wertheimer's property, and the conviction of another who was believed to have the pictures, various promises were made to the thief. They were not kept. It is a story of betrayal and treachery, of blundering and business stupidity, with the loss of two great masterpieces as a consequence, and of a man condemned to penal servitude on the false testimony of the thief.

The thief went through his trial as "John Smith," and as John Smith I shall write of him. How I came to learn Smith's story and the secret of the disappearance of the masterpieces requires little telling. Smith has been living out of England for the past ten years, "going straight." He came to me when I was associated with a newspaper in a foreign land, and, disclosing some of the facts without revealing at the moment his own connection with an almost forgotten crime, asked me whether I thought a complete revelation of the truth would be of interest to the public.

"I am the man the police knew as 'John Smith,' " said my visitor. "I committed the burglary. If I can prove to you that what was published was all lies, and that a man was wrongly convicted through the perjury of myself and others, would the story be of interest?"

"Probably," I replied; "but the most important thing the public will want to know is what became of the pictures. Can you tell me that?"

"Yes," said Smith; "but before I do so I want to say why I have come to you. I have been convicted as a thief and have paid the penalty. For years I have been living an honest life, secure from identification, safe from police supervision, and safe from old acquaintances whom I never want to meet. I am not, and never was, a criminal by inclination. I was driven to crime by starvation and desperation. When I went wrong I was persecuted and hounded from one crime to another; betrayed by men I trusted; tricked and trapped by the police with the aid of their tools, ten times worse criminals than myself. Persons who made me the most solemn promises broke them shamefully. I want to tell my story to the world. I am not looking for money—I could have had any sum for the return of those pictures. Now it is too late."

"Lady Sitting on a Sofa," by Lavrience: the other of the miniatures taken in the Park Lane robbery

"It is not too late," I said. "The pictures must be returned to the rightful owner, and, unless you promise to return them, I can not have anything to do with your story. You can claim the reward, but you must give up the paintings."

"It is too late," Smith insisted. "They are destroyed!"

Then he told me the fate of the masterpieces.

"Is this the truth?" I asked.

"I can not prove it to you," Smith replied; "but when you have heard my story you can decide whether I have told you the truth about my life. If it is the truth, then you can say whether what I have said about the pictures is also true."

This was the only test I could apply. I believe Smith has told the whole truth, and I am forced to believe that the pictures have actually been destroyed. I give his story in his own words.

John Smith's Story of the Park Lane Robbery

WHEN I confessed to the great Park Lane robbery, a prison official stated that I had served two sentences before. He did not say, if he knew, that the second one was for a crime I had never committed. The police knew.

On May 29, 1899, I was sentenced at the Old Bailey to three years' imprisonment for forgery. I served this wrongful sentence. When I was released I was still bitter, but I wanted to live honestly. Never before had I been in trouble with the police. It took me a long time to get employment, and, when I did, the fact that I had been convicted followed me.

I married a woman as good as she was sweet. Her loyalty and affection for me have never wavered. Together we went through all the hardships that come to those who are poor in London, or against whom the stigma of a past directs its shafts. We started a little business with some money I won when I backed Black Sand for the Cesarevitch Stakes. We were getting along nicely when I made a bad deal for the purchase of an addition to the business, and we lost everything. Again I went tramping in search of work, occasionally getting a job as a waiter.

For a time I was employed two or three days a week by Lord Fletcher Moulton, and, as assistant to his butler, had the task of cleaning the gold and silver plate. Had I been naturally dishonest I could have stolen hundreds of pounds' worth of property then, but I wished to go straight. Lord Moulton went abroad. I was promised that he would recommend me for a situation because I was honest and faithful. Nothing ever came of these promises, and as winter came on I grew desperate. Two children had been born to us, and the third was expected. The rent was overdue, and I was earning nothing.

In my plight I met a man named Angelo Marino, an unprincipled hanger-on of criminals. He never had the courage to commit a burglary; but, as I was to learn, he could always suggest one and wait to share in the spoils.

Marino told me that he knew a man who could always dispose of any stolen goods, and suggested that, if I could do a "job," this was the man who would see me through. Desperation made me receptive, and I actually thought of breaking into Lord Fletcher Moulton's house. I was quite aware that when the family went away everything of any value was locked up in the strong-room, but I was in hopes of getting enough to see me over my troubles; and, besides, I was nursing a spirit of revenge because I considered that the promises made to me on behalf of his lordship had been broken. I duly met Morris, the art dealer, who lived in Studly Road, Clapham, and we came to a perfect understanding. If I got hold of anything he was to dispose of it and we should go halves. The same night I made the acquaintance of Morris, I broke into Lord Moulton's house, and though, as I expected, there was not much of value to be had, I still got away with two parcels, which I took to Morris. When arrested for the Wertheimer robbery I told the police about this burglary, but it was agreed between Inspector Fowler, Sergeant Ebbage, and me that nothing should be said about the affair, because they knew very well they could not connect Morris with it. Out of this first burglary I realized the magnificent sum of twenty-five shillings.

As the result of a heart-to-heart talk with Morris and my warning that any treachery on his part would not be forgotten, we seemed to come to a working arrangement. Morris appeared to know all about the millionaire homes, and he told me about the contents of the house of Mr. Armand Hoghton, in Hyde Park Terrace. Morris said the job was dangerous.

"Never mind about the danger," I said; "that is my lookout. What I want to be sure about is whether the things are really worth getting—because, let me remind you, I don't want to do more than one job."

My intention then was to carry out one substantial "job" and get enough from it to take me out of the country. Morris himself was in financial difficulties.

"Worth getting?" he replied. "Why, they are worth £500 each, and there are over twenty of them!"

This was a gross exaggeration, because the goods were afterward estimated to be worth only £250. I broke into Mr. Hoghton's house and got away with the heavy bronzes, which I took to Morris. He protested that the things were not worth what he had thought. Finally I got £15 out of him. And now comes a ludicrous chapter in this episode. As I was walking about the West End one day I saw Morris with a man on either side of him. He was carrying what was unmistakably a part of the stolen property with him, and his companions bore on their faces and in their manner the seal of Scotland Yard. I was astounded. Morris saw me, but turned his head away. I followed the trio into several saloons and kept to them till the night, when the two detectives shook hands with the fence and left him.

As soon as I thought it prudent I called on Morris and demanded an explanation of the affair. He was most concerned lest I should be seen with him, but he told me how cleverly he had hoodwinked the supposed geniuses of the Yard. When he had hawked the bronzes all over the place, just like a coster selling apples, the police dropped on him, but he was an innocent babe. With a few drinks and a pleasant manner he deluded the police, and walked all over the town with them—looking for the man who had sold him the stolen goods.

Later I made the acquaintance of another "antiquarian" named Crescenti, a bosom friend of Angelo Marino. I was becoming familiar with a pretty fine set by now, crooks and fences and informers. They were always ready to suggest profitable jobs, and assured me they could dispose of anything. I learned what a hopeless, treacherous

From the "Burlington Magazine" (England)

Portrait of Nancy Parsons, by Gainsborough

Stolen from the collection of Mr. Charles Wertheimer

crowd they were. In November of 1906 I was introduced to Charley Tomlins, described by Marino as a first-class man for disposing of stolen goods. There was to his credit the fact that, though he had been concerned in any number of robberies, he had always been cunning enough to keep out of the hands of the police. Later I learned why. The man was a "mark," or informer, and enjoyed police protection. He was a valuable employee of the Yard. What he did in my case finished his reputation for him.

"Had I known," he cried, "I would not have given Smith away for £10,000."

He felt it sincerely when a mob in Tottenham Court Road rushed him after the case, and the police had to rescue him from being torn to pieces. Tomlins proposed several burglaries to me, but as none of them promised a big result I would not touch them. At last he and Marino selected what they assured me was an ideal job—something for me to spend a Merry Christmas over!

There was a certain beautiful woman living in Park Street who bore the reputation of being a highly fashionable coquette, finding her lovers among the most aristocratic circles. Diamonds and other jewels

were showered on her. Through one of her servants it was known to Tomlins and Marino that she was leaving for the country. I made no inquiries, but relied on the information given me. Off I set on Christmas morning, and found, to my joy, that the house next to that of Mrs. Sappho was empty. Nothing seemed easier than to get into the empty house, breaking through the wall into her bedroom.

It was broad day when I got through the wall, or nearly so, and, taking a spell before I removed the last bricks, I happened to go to the window to look into the street below. There was an immense crowd of people packed like sardines all round the place, and dozens of police. The lady's house had not been deserted, as I was assured it would be. My hammering at the wall had aroused somebody, the police had been informed, and I was hopelessly trapped.

Downstairs I rushed, into the basement, just as the police crashed through the roof and went helter-skelter down to where they expected me to be still working. Other police were at the front door, and I was between two fires. I got into the larder, a semi-dark room, and looked in the gloom for a hiding-place. There was an ordinary household meat-safe hanging on the wall. How I got into it I don't know yet, but I did, and doubled up in it like the girl-in-the-box trick, holding the screen-wire door to by one finger. There I crouched, scarcely daring to breathe, while the police, after rushing all over the house, came into the larder. Looking out, I could see all that was going on. The police looked up the chimney and skylight, and the inspector actually came to the safe and tried it. As I was holding on to the door with all my might, it resisted his efforts.

Just then one of the constables ventured the opinion that I must have gone out on the roof. "Steady, steady!" cried the inspector, "look properly!" and as he said this, he lighted a stub of candle and held it to the safe door. But one of the men was looking at him, and I could see his sneer as he marveled at the inspector's stupidity in believing that a man could have got into such a place and still be there. The inspector interrupted his look in my direction, and blew out the candle. I stayed in that meat-safe for hours, and it was only at night, when the watch on the place had relaxed, that I managed to get out, and, after restoring life to my cramped limbs, made a dash for liberty.

You can imagine that I was furious with the others over what happened to me at Park Street. For some weeks after the affair I kept very quiet. Then I met Morris again. His financial position had improved, and he was happy. We had a drink and were soon discussing business. He told me he had been thinking about a Jew who was immensely rich, and owned any amount of priceless gems of art, a rare collection of snuff-boxes and valuable paintings.

"Mind," he went on, "I may as well tell you that the job is a very difficult one, for the Jew has the place fixed up like a little fortress—alarm-bells everywhere—and it's his boast that it's burglar-proof."

"Listen," I said. "I'll walk round the place and see whether it's possible to do anything or not. If I decide on doing it you must promise me first that if I fall into the hands of the police you will look after my family."

"Oh, yes," said Morris; "I will do that. I promise you. I hope I shall always be man enough for that."

"Now tell me," I continued, "what will you be doing with the goods this time if I succeed in getting them? Will you be going round the West End with them in your pockets, showing them to everybody and asking people to buy them like you did before?"

"Oh, no," Morris replied, "this time I shall be quite prepared for it. I am going to write to a man in Paris who is very rich," said Morris, "and who buys everything that's really good. He's quite safe, so the moment you come with the stuff we'll bunk off to Paris."

So it was arranged. Morris gave me Mr. Wertheimer's address, and I went round to his house to look the situation over. It was indeed a carefully protected house, but I detected a weak spot. Back to Morris I went, and told him that, though the job was difficult and dangerous, I thought I could do it. I got from him a renewal of his promises, and he assured me that he would never desert me or my wife and family. He gave me his hand on it, but in parting I warned him that if he played me false in any way he would find me a very bad enemy.

How the Burglary Was Committed

ON the night of February 11, 1907, I had come to the end of my financial tether. My family was on the verge of starvation. The rent was due. I had to do something. Wertheimer's house and all the treasure it contained had for days been exercising a kind of magnetic power over my mind. I left home about midnight and made my way to Park Lane. My burglar instruments consisted of the worn-out stump of an ordinary table-knife, a stub of candle, and a box of matches.

The night was cold and damp, with rain threatening. By 1:30 a. m. I was at the house, but, as I saw a light in one of the top windows, I walked away again, took a long turn round, and came back about 3 a. m. The light was still burning, and I concluded somebody must be ill. In other circumstances I should have given up the job for that night, but mine were not ordinary circumstances. Another second and I was standing on the area railings, where they joined those of Mr. Wertheimer's neighbor. From the railings it was only a step to a ledge above the door of the second house, a ledge that seemed to have been put there for my purpose. A second step to the left and I was walking along the balustrade that ran in front of the windows, and so to the top of the porch above the main entrance to the Wertheimer mansion. I don't suppose it took me fifteen seconds to get from the road to the porch, so easy and smooth was the way, and yet so much pain and care had been spent in making the place inaccessible! Not even after the robbery could any one imagine or suggest how I had managed to climb to where I had opened a window, and after I was sentenced Mr. Wertheimer's solicitor asked me as a favor to enlighten them on this point, as they wished to prevent a recurrence of the affair. I gave the information.

Hardly had I got to the top of the porch when a postman came along to collect letters from the box on the corner, about fifteen yards from Mr. Wertheimer's house. I hadn't time to stoop down out of sight, so I looked up intently at the sky. No doubt the postman took me for an inmate of the house casting an eye at the heavens for rain. He collected his letters and left me to my job. I produced my old knife, inserted the blade between the window-sashes, pushed back the latch, and, raising the window, stepped into the smoking-room. I closed the window silently and stood there in intense darkness, waiting to accustom my eyes to the gloom. I dared not light my candle

From the 'Burlington Magazine" (England)

Portrait of the Honorable Mrs. Charles Yorke, by Reynolds

Stolen from the collection of Mr. Charles Wertheimer

because its flicker would have betrayed me to any passing policeman. How I cursed old Morris, who had been too mean to spare me a few shillings for an electric torch to lighten the darkness for just one fleeting moment! What treasures such a flash of light would have revealed to me! How much easier would have been my task! I could see nothing of what was in the room, and I concluded there could be little of value. Cautiously I groped my way to that part of the building that was dimly lighted by the reflection of the electric lamps in Park Lane.

Even so I could see nothing of all Morris had told me about, barring oil paintings, and I did not propose to touch these if I could find anything of more value and more portable. I searched the drawers. All empty! I was beginning to think that Morris had made a fool of me, and, on realizing the great risk I had taken, as I thought all for nothing, I began to get unnerved. The place seemed to be haunted. The floor-boards were almost sinking in some places, and creaked loudly. Outside the wind was howling, and as it came through the crevices of distant windows it sounded like somebody speaking.

At last I decided to remove some of the oil paint-

"Steady!" The inspector held a candle to the door

ings from their frames. For this, however, I had not come prepared: I needed a sharp knife. I did what I could with the old knife, but it was so blunt, it made me sweat at my work. I succeeded in cutting out the Gainsborough and the Reynolds. Then I heard, or thought I heard, a voice, and I remembered the light I had seen in the top floor. I rushed out on to the landing; but I decided the noise was only the wind. I went back to the drawing-room to get the two paintings, but did not go on with my cutting out of the third, on which I had started. Back to the smoking-room I came, looking for paper in which to roll up the two pictures.

Whether the room was now lighter, or whether my eyes had become accustomed to the darkness, I saw what I had been unable to see before, and my heart leaped with joy. Standing against the wall on one side of the room was a case with glass doors, crammed full of gold objects of art. While conversing later with Mr. Wertheimer's solicitor at the Old Bailey, I learned that that case alone contained objects worth £500,000, among which were some large gold cups, masterpieces of Benvenuto Cellini. The solicitor seemed surprised I had not taken these, but I told him I chose other less bulky articles. I was after the snuff-boxes that Morris had said he could so easily dispose of. On spotting the case I cast about for the best possible means of opening it, and, passing my hand along the metal frame in which the glass was set, I found the key. Everything was so easy, it seemed as if some kind friend in the house had expected me and wanted to help. One by one I removed the snuff-boxes, and a couple of miniatures in diamond-studded frames. I was satisfied with what I had, and left a huge fortune behind me.

I wrapped up the choice objects of art, and stuffed them one by one in separate wrappings inside the roll formed by the two oil paintings. Tying the whole parcel up neatly, and tucking it under my arm, I proceeded as quickly as possible downstairs, intending to leave by the front entrance, which seemed to be quite a respectable manner of proceeding. I had some difficulty in ascertaining the time. There were plenty of clocks about, but they all showed different hours. I suppose they were very valuable as works of art, but I had to consult the big clock in the hall before I was satisfied about the time. It was half-past five.

Quietly I approached the front door, and, putting my parcel down, I felt for the latch. As I released it the door gave a jerk toward me. I checked its motion, knowing full well that if it came open a burglar-alarm would be set off. The alarms were too high up for me to reach them, and besides it was a little too early to molest the servants. So I made up my mind to wait half an hour before chancing the alarm. I knew that at six the policemen would be relieving one another, and they would not feel inclined, when going off duty or coming on, to go out of their way to bother me.

At a few minutes to six, just as the policemen were eagerly awaiting relief, I resolutely opened the front door and walked out with the parcel under my arm. Immediately the alarms started a veritable pandemonium. On getting to the corner I turned to the right toward the park. Just in front of Mr. Wertheimer's house there was a small gate leading into Hyde Park, and I made for it, feeling sure that any pursuer would go flying everywhere but there. As I got inside the park fence I stood behind a tree to see what would happen next. I had not been mistaken. Several men were running in every direction but mine. One old gentleman in shirt-sleeves, and with a pronounced Semitic profile, rushed to a coffee-stall that stood near the Marble Arch. He was gesticulating wildly, and shouting, while holding his head in both hands.

Clean Away

I LEFT my tree and crossed to Hyde Park Corner, entered the Green Park, and made for Westminster Bridge. I was about opposite Buckingham Palace when I was startled by the sound of hurrying footsteps. I turned and saw a policeman. There was I with the "swag" under my arm, convinced that the man was after me. My wits had to save me. I stopped and waited for the policeman to overtake me.

"Got a match, sir?" I asked, as he came up.

"Yes, certainly," he answered, doubtless mollified by that "sir."

Marino and Tomlins stuck to me like leeches

Morris, the art dealer, knew all about millionaires' homes

I heard the policeman behind me . . . my wits had to save me

He handed me a box and I gave him a cigarette. Then, chatting pleasantly about the rotten weather, we walked on. What a chance he missed! On reaching the little bridge on the Serpentine, another shock awaited me. Ten or twelve policemen were standing drawn up in two rows on each side of the bridge. To turn back was madness. With my new companion I walked straight on, and bidding him "Good day," walked through that cordon of police and away.

When I reached my poverty-stricken dwelling, and had laid the valuable roll in the corner of the kitchen, I collapsed. How long I was in a state of oblivion I don't know, but when I roused myself I realized that I must lose no time. Wearily I dragged myself to Morris's house and told him the result of my night's work. Morris was overjoyed.

"I could never have believed it," he declared.

He came round to my place to inspect the stuff, and his hands trembled with excitement as he fingered the treasures. Somehow they looked more exquisite and valuable in the sordid setting of my poor home than they had appeared to me before. He left my house in high glee, telling me he was going to get the money so that we could clear off to Paris at once, and arranging for me to meet him at Kensington Oval at 4:30 p.m. I slept till three o'clock, and then sallied forth, to walk in a leisurely fashion in the direction of the Oval. When I got into Clapham Road it seemed to me that everybody was shouting my secret at me. Newsboys were yelling: "SENSATIONAL PARK LANE ROBBERY!" "MILLIONAIRE'S HOUSE LOOTED!" "THE RED BERRY CLUE!" From every placard the same words leaped at me, and in little groups the street loungers were excitedly discussing the sensation of the day. What a stir the thing was creating! Punctually at four-thirty Morris met me, but what a change had come over him! All his sprightliness was gone. He was trembling and panic-stricken.

"You should hear the row the old card-sharper is kicking up," he said. "You'd think a saint had been robbed! I believe I have been followed by the police and advise you keeping away from me for a few days!"

"Have you got the money to go to Paris?" I inquired.

"Not yet," Morris replied, "but I'll get it. And now I must leave you, because it won't do for us to be seen together."

I told him I must have some money to go on with and he gave me thirty shillings. Then we parted.

For some days I kept quiet, resting and waiting developments. The police, despite their "wonderful astuteness," "unremitting activity," and all the rest of it, were completely baffled, and though they kept up a pretense of being able to make red berries talk, they could do nothing. In entering Mr. Wertheimer's house I had knocked a few red berries off a potted plant, and much was made of this remarkable clue.

On the advice of the police, Mr. Wertheimer offered £1,000 reward for information. The notice was placarded all over London, and it made me uneasy. Apart from Morris, there were others who must be morally certain the robbery had been carried out by me. Among these men were Angelo and his constant companion, Tomlins. Still, I felt no immediate danger. The value of the stolen property had been blazoned everywhere as £40,000, and I calculated that before Angelo or Tomlins would go for the reward, if they contemplated informing on me, they would try to participate in the booty, any share of which would represent a much higher sum than £1,000.

My anxiety, however, was to dispose of the goods quickly. Again I went to Morris and demanded that he fulfill his part in the original bargain. He was the picture of misery when I met him, and trembled like a leaf. He had done nothing about going to Paris.

"I can't have anything to do with it," he protested.

"You miserable cur!" I cried. "Now that you have made me do a thing that has drawn upon me all the bloodhounds of Scotland Yard, you can't have anything more to do with it, can't you!"

The man was hopeless. He funked his part. All he did was to show me a letter from the man in Paris, who had now come to London and was staying at one of the biggest hotels; but he would not let me go near that man. He did tell me how to protect and hide the pictures, but he would not receive them, and he refused to give me any money.

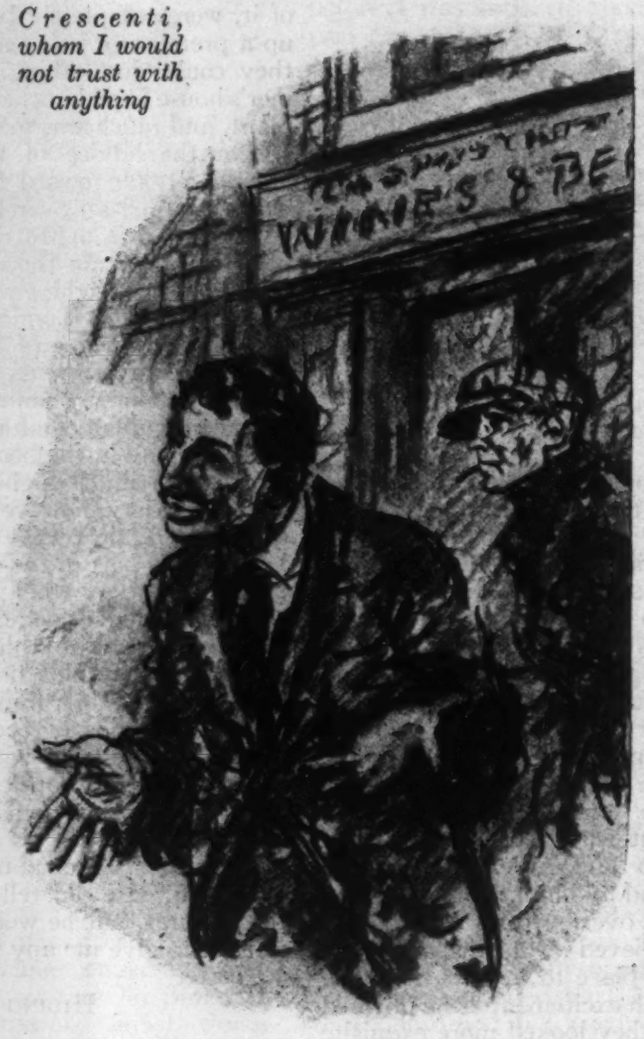
Hiding the Paintings

SO there was I in possession of property the police were hunting high and low for. I had a collection of snuff-boxes that not even the Great Czar of Russia ever possessed, and two masterpieces; yet they were of no value unless I could dispose of them. The mere possession of them would not pay my rent or buy food, and constituted a menace to my liberty and the happiness of my wife and little ones. And Morris would do nothing. He had turned cur. If later I made him suffer, can my motive for so doing be misunderstood or wondered at?

Seeing that Morris was hopeless, and I was not yet prepared to trust anybody else with the secret, I set about hiding the stolen things. Climbing up on the top of my kitchen dresser one day when my wife and children were out, I made a hole in the ceiling, above

"Have you got a match, sir?"

the dresser. I carefully wrapped up the snuff-boxes and pushed them in through the hole, which I then plastered up. The pictures I treated as Morris had instructed me. I pasted several sheets of brown paper over them, until the canvases looked and felt like a thin board. Under the staircase I found a roll of paper of the same pattern as that on the kitchen walls. Selecting the darkest corner of the kitchen, I laid the pictures against the wall and fastened them to it with fine nails; then I pasted the new paper over the lot. It was a perfect job. The design of the paper fitted exactly, and not even my wife ever noticed that the wall had been tampered with. Later on, when I felt the catastrophe looming over me, I removed the pictures; and I may as well tell that part of the story here.



Crescenti, whom I would not trust with anything

In another part of London lived an old friend in whose house I had occupied a room years before. We had lost trace of each other for some time. I went to him and told him that I had come up from the country and wanted a lodging for a day or two. He and his wife were glad to see me, and at once suggested that I should have my old room. The trouble of getting my wife and family out of our house while I removed the pictures and re-fixed the wall, and of getting my friends away from their home while I found a new hiding-place for the masterpieces, I managed by various ruses. At last I had the paintings plastered into the wall of my friend's house, behind a cupboard, and there they remained till 1918.

Before I had disposed of the pictures I was busily working for the disposal of the snuff-boxes and the miniatures. From the latter I had removed all the diamonds, and two of the stones, as large as beans, I had made up into earrings, with the idea of selling the gems bit by bit to keep me going. Then I went in search of Marino. He claimed to know that I had committed the robbery, and was enthusiastic in his professional praise of my ability. I finally admitted the truth, and at once he began planning for the sale of the property. The earrings and some of the largest stones I handed to Marino, and much to my disgust he gave them to Tomlins. That worthy sold them, but handed us only a few pounds. From this moment Marino and Tomlins stuck to me like leeches. Bit by bit Tomlins got the diamonds from me, always telling me some tale why the financial returns were not larger, and always begging me to let him have the snuff-boxes. Then along came Crescenti. I had given Marino two snuff-boxes and the miniatures, and he was supposed to go to Paris to dispose of them, informing me that his companion was a respectable trader of Bond Street. It was all lies. His companion was Crescenti, and when I exposed his villainy he admitted it. Such were the men I had to associate with—Morris, a cur; Tomlins, the drunken Bermondsey crook and "mark"; Marino, a cowardly sponger; and Crescenti, whom I would not trust with anything. They all had my secret, and one of them now had some of the property with which to incriminate me.

Betrayed

TOMLINS came to me toward the end of April and said he had at last found a buyer for the two snuff-boxes. I said he should get £300 for the two, and this was the price the police induced Mr. Berry, the custodian of Mr. Wertheimer's art gallery, to pay. Tomlins got the money and halved it with me. We settled the deal at my home. On May 6 Tomlins came to me and said his friend would buy all the snuff-boxes. I doubted it, but I got them all down from their hiding-place, and when Tomlins called again that afternoon I had no time to put them away. Hurriedly I shoved all but four of them into a drawer, and went into the next room to meet him. He was strangely agitated. I had the four snuff-boxes in my coat pocket, and I tried to induce him to carry them to his "friend," the buyer, but he would not have them.

He said, "Let's have a drink." We went to the Wurtemberg Hotel, where we had a compartment to ourselves. Tomlins banged a half-crown down and asked me what I would have. The publican came for our order, brought the drinks, and as he put them down, Tomlins snatched up his half-crown and bolted like a madman. The trap was set and sprung. I rushed to the door, and found myself face to face with Inspector Fowler and Sergeant Ebbage. The disaster had fallen. I was in the hands of the police, tricked and betrayed by Tomlins.

Resistance was impossible. Ebbage went straight to my coat-tail pockets and found the four snuff-boxes.

"You know what I've got and what I'm doing," I said in reply to their questions, "but why did you allow Tomlins to get away? He is my accomplice. He is the villain who put you up to this, and that's why you let him get away," I said.

"Oh, no," replied Ebbage; "the others will get him. He'll be at the station when you get there."

Ebbage was a blunt and blundering liar. Fowler was the calculating mind in the conduct of the case and always avoided exposing his hand. When I was released after my prison term I found Fowler had been

promoted, but the brilliant Ebbage had resigned—under compulsion, I believe.

They hustled me away from the hotel, hailed a cab, and drove me to Brixton Police Station. Ebbage questioned me in the cab. I told him to get what information he wanted from Tomlins. That annoyed him and he gave me a dig in the ribs with his elbow. At the station I was placed in a cell, and watched through the night because it was feared I might attempt suicide. Nothing was further from my thoughts. My motto was, "He who fights and gets away lives to fight another day," and I had some fighting to do.

In the morning I was formally charged, and, handcuffed to Ebbage and accompanied by Inspector Bower, we drove to Marlborough Street Police Court. Ebbage began the usual questions, telling me they had recovered some of the stuff and it would be better for me if I confessed everything. I had been pondering over things during the night. Through the selfishness, duplicity, and cowardice of my associates, to say nothing of cold-blooded treachery, I had fallen, and I was going to have revenge. On account of the old age of Morris, I would give him another chance. Ebbage listened eagerly while I told about Crescenti, who still had the two snuff-boxes and the miniatures.

"As for the diamonds and the other property," I said, without specifying anything in particular, "Tomlins has had them."

Ebbage lost the tense look of curiosity and interest that he had hitherto shown, and became more concerned about the passing traffic.

"What about the pictures?" he asked.

I looked in his big fat face to see whether he knew anything. "Tomlins has them," I replied, and enjoyed the rage of the man as he surlily ceased his questions.

At Marlborough Street an immaculately dressed gentleman was ushered into my cell, and introduced himself as Mr. Arthur Newton, retained by some of my friends to defend me. I knew no friends who would engage a lawyer for me, but I told him about my arrest and the statement I had made to the police, Then my name was called, and I stepped into the dock, the object, as on several later occasions, of the curious gaze of hundreds of pairs of eyes, eager to see the "desperate" character who had created such a sensation. The details of this preliminary hearing will be remembered and there is no need to repeat them. The police had gone to my home and recovered the snuff-boxes, just where I had hurriedly left them, and they were laid out in court, giving one paper the opportunity to flaunt the headline, "COURT AGLOW WITH JEWELS." Had I had five minutes before Tomlins called to betray me, I would have hidden those jewels where I don't think the police would have recovered them.

The usual formalities were gone through, and I was remanded till May 15, when I again appeared before the magistrate, Mr. Denman. Mr. Gill, K.C., was prosecuting, and related the story of the burglary before an audience that filled the court to suffocation. Ebbage and Fowler gave evidence of arrest, and of the statements I had made in which I admitted the burglary. Nothing new was forthcoming, but the feature of this hearing was the struggle between Mr. Newton, Mr. Gill, the police, and the magistrate to show up the part Tomlins had played, or to resist showing it up.

Tomlins was a valuable servant, and at any cost he had to be protected by his employers. He wasn't valuable after Mr. Newton's cross-examination. His "reputation" in the underworld was gone.

Committed for trial, I went back to my cell. Later the sliding panel opened and the red face of Ebbage appeared. "Look here," he snapped. "You better tell us about old Morris."

They could not say I was not carrying out my part of the bargain as I stood there and lied

My Revenge on Morris

I WANTED revenge on Morris, but I decided to give him one more chance. When my wife came to see me, I told her to write to Morris and remind him of his promises, also to tell him that if he wished to avoid trouble he should provide for her, as he had bargained.

I believe it was June 3, 1907, when Crescenti and I came up for trial at the Old Bailey. I pleaded guilty and was sent below while Crescenti, who pleaded not guilty, was being tried. He stated again that he had not received the snuff-boxes and miniatures from me, and that the miniatures were both stripped of their diamonds when he received them. Both statements were perfectly correct, but neither the police nor the court would accept them. Crescenti was found guilty and received sentence of five years. While I was waiting below I solicited an interview with the police, and was accommodated with Inspector Fowler and Sergeant Ebbage.

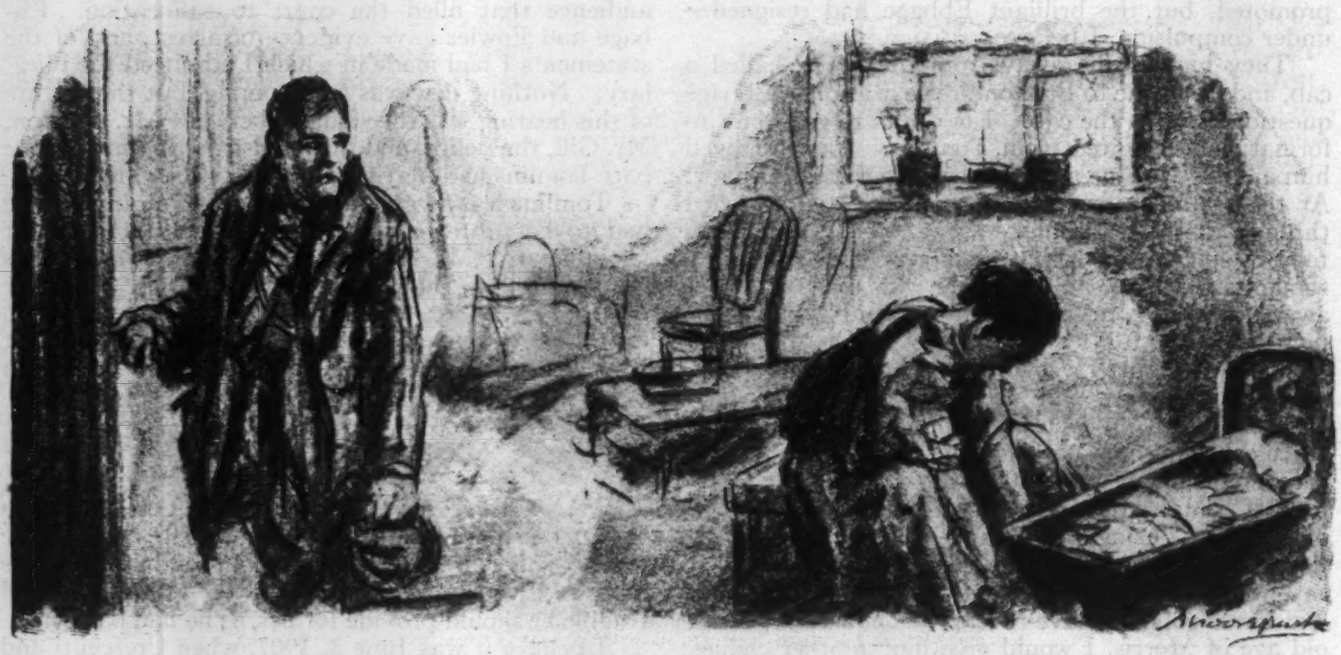
"I expect you guess why I have asked for this interview?" I said. They both smiled sweetly. "I understand from Mr. Ebbage," I added, "that you know who has the pictures?"

"Old Morris," they chimed in. "We have known it all along, but we could not proceed against him without a statement from you to that effect."

"Very well," I said. "If I make the statement, can I rely on the promises Mr. Ebbage made to me to make things easier for me, and also to get Mr. Wertheimer to see that my wife and children do not fall into want while I am in prison? The best way to do that is to set my wife up in a little paper and tobacco business. She is used to the trade, and it would enable her to look after herself and the children without parting from them, as they are too young."

"If you help us to secure Morris's conviction," said Inspector Fowler, "we will make it much easier for you, and we will also get Mr. Wertheimer to set up the Missus in a little business. We give you our word of honor that we'll do all we promise, but you mustn't say anything about this to any one."

With this definite understanding, I made the bargain, and signed a statement that meant the doom of old Morris. I told them everything about the earlier burglaries, and proceeded to



My family was on the verge of starvation; the rent was due. I had to do something

inform them, what they declared they already knew, that Morris had the two pictures. We parted good friends.

Some days after I had been admitted to Wormwood Scrubbs Prison I was taken from my cell and conducted to the office. There Inspector Fowler and Sergeant Ebbage greeted me with a cheery "Hullo, Smith, how are you?"

Then they told me that Morris was a prisoner, and got the rest of the statement they wanted from me to secure his conviction.

I had told the police all about the robberies with which Morris had been concerned as receiver of stolen property. He was convicted and sentenced to five years over the burglary at the house of Mr. Hoghton, when he had received the bronzes and had treated me so shabbily over the proceeds. What the police particularly wanted, however, was his conviction over the Wertheimer affair.

Serving My Sentence

I WAS taken from prison for Morris's trial. There was a crowded court, and all eyes were on me as I began the recital of my tale. Morris looked weary but calm; I believe he confidently expected to be acquitted. His age almost moved me to pity, but then I recollected that he had done nothing to fulfill his solemn vows to me, and I proceeded with the story that was delighting my friends of the Yard. They could not say I was not carrying out my bargain as I stood there and lied. I said Morris took the pictures and a snuff-box. My wife was called as a witness to prove that Morris had been at our home, and Mrs. Barrett, the landlady, identified him as the man who had called to see me on the morning of the robbery. Seven years for Mr. Morris! I saw Morris afterward in Parkhurst Prison. He rushed up to me and said, "Hullo, old man; I'm glad to see you." He bore no ill will against me then, but told me frankly he deserved what I had got for him because he had let me down.

I found the governor of Wormwood Scrubbs Prison a straight and just man, though a strict disciplinarian. In fact, all the prison governors I met were, with one exception, thorough gentlemen fulfilling a very difficult duty conscientiously and well. I can't say the same for the prison chaplains. At the Scrubbs I told the governor about my wife and children, and the promises that had been made to me. He kindly interested himself, and as far as he was able tried to get various supposedly charitable institutions to do something. Nothing was ever done. Before Morris was convicted of the Wertheimer affair I asked permission to write to Inspector Fowler and remind him of his promises. I knew the prison authorities would study the letter. The permission was granted. One day I was taken from my cell to the office, and there sat Inspector Fowler and Ebbage.

"Well, what's brought you here now?" I inquired.

"Your letter to us, man," said Fowler. "Why, you mustn't write about what we promised you. Suppose that letter had got into somebody else's hands, it might have done a lot of mischief! Look here, Smith, we mean to do all we have promised, but can't until Morris has been tried and convicted for receiving the pictures. Of course you know he has been convicted for receiving the bronzes?"

"That ought to be enough," I remarked. But no, they wanted him convicted over the Wertheimer affair and laughed at me when I told them my statement could not be corroborated. At Morris's trial, I may mention, Mr. Gill examined me, and elicited the facts that I had worked since my previous sentence, and had made an earnest attempt to earn an honest living, finally resorting to crime because my family was starving. That made me sound like a reputable witness, and the case against Morris became blacker because he appeared as the tempter. The mockery of it!

Well, when Morris was duly convicted on perjury, all the promises made to me vanished. Mr. Wertheimer was induced to give my wife £25, "to set her up in business." I got a remission of nine months from my long sentence. Nine months, in a case like mine, when I had enabled them to convict Crescenti and had turned king's evidence against Morris! I challenge any one to find a precedent that a king's witness has received only a remission of one seventh of his sentence!

Everybody in the case convicted except the police tool, Tomlins, the next thing was to get the pictures.

The police knew Morris never had them. If he had, then why did not the clever authorities recover them, or trace their whereabouts? Because I alone had the secret, and in face of all the broken promises was not going to part with it. Mr. Wertheimer's solicitors came to me; the police came to me; in prison the spies came to me for that secret. The pictures were never recovered. Yet I told them all that if they had honorably carried out their promises I would have had the pictures back in Mr. Wertheimer's drawing-room in no time and would not expect one penny of the reward offered.

Ebbage came to Exeter Prison, where I had been transferred when the remission of nine months had been granted. He said I evidently knew more about the pictures than I had told, and again he promised that if I would disclose where they were he would get me a further remission.

We had a nice little talk, during which I reminded him he had told the judge he knew Morris had the pictures.

"You made a big bloomer that time," I said. "I know where the pictures are."

"Then you committed perjury," said Ebbage.

"I did nothing more than what you did," was my quick rejoinder. I refused to tell where the pictures were, and defied him. I refused to sign any statement, because a friendly prison official had warned me there could be no compulsion in such a matter.

The next move was when I was at Portland in 1910. A quiet, sneaking sort of man named Morgan was working in the gang with me, and kept pumping me about my case. He and everybody knew Morris was innocent, and that I could tell where the pictures were. Morgan said his "brother" was visiting him and writing petitions for him. If I would give him the secret his "brother" would write one for me. The man was too simple; I merely played with him till in disgust he gave up the quest.

Then a man named Shakell tried his hand. He was about to be discharged, and was ready to swear eternal friendship to my wife and me in return for the secret. He knew where and how to sell the pictures, and we were all to be set up for life. I sent this poor soul out on a wild-goose chase. He got what he thought was the secret a day or two before his discharge, and Morgan knew he had it. Morgan's "brother" was duly advised, and off they went to break into the wall at No. 4 Lansdowne Gardens where the pictures had first been hidden.

Shakell had been gone about a week when Morgan received a visit from his "brother." I remember that Saturday afternoon well. Morgan was one of the mess orderlies that day, and when he came to my cell with my food after his "brother's" visit his face was distorted with passion. The next day, Sunday, he worked his way next to me at exercise, and said he had consulted his relative and was sure I would get some remission if I would tell him where the pictures were. I said nothing. On the Monday morning, while my gang was standing waiting for tools, a man jumped out of the line, and electrified everybody by seizing Morgan by the throat and pounding his face like a steam-hammer.

"You — —!" said the fighting one as his fists went home, "you wanted to give that man away! Come on, there's another for you!"

Before the wardens could interfere Morgan's face was beaten to pulp. The explanation of this incident is that on the Saturday afternoon some of the prisoners had recognized Morgan's "brother" and friend as my old and inquisitive confederates, Fowler and Ebbage. The news got all over the prison, and the impulsive fighter could not restrain himself when he came face to face with Morgan, the tool of the "splits."

"You miserable cur! You can't have anything more to do with it, can't you?"

A Mysterious Police Action

WHEN, shortly after the death of my two children, I wrote from prison to Mr. Wertheimer, reminding him of his promises to look after my wife and children, I received a letter, dated April 16, 1909, from Messrs. Bircham & Co., his solicitors. They replied that Mr. Wertheimer was abroad and they added:

"We ourselves made such representation as we could to the authorities at Scotland Yard with a view to obtaining a *proper* remission of your sentence."

They claimed that Mr. Wertheimer had "very generously" provided my wife with a sum sufficient to stock a small shop, and went on to say that if I were able to give information as to the missing pictures, they would see that such information should be suitably and properly recognized. I think it will be agreed that Messrs. Bircham recognized that the remission so far given was not a proper one.

On my release from prison, I was taken to Vine Street Police Station, where I was surrounded by a crowd of detectives as an object of curiosity and for purposes of future identification. One of the officers told me that Ebbage had had to resign. Though Fowler was in the building at the moment, I was told that he was too busy to see me. This was strange, because he was the man most interested in me. I could only assume that he knew I had beaten him, and that he had some sense of shame and wanted nothing further to do with the case. An inspector came forward and, handing me a tiny envelope, said:

"Mr. Fowler is too busy to see you, but he wishes me to return to you this envelope and its contents, which were found on your kitchen dresser."

I was thunderstruck. The envelope contained thirty-five small diamonds which I had stripped from Mr. Wertheimer's miniatures! Then they must have known all along that Crescenti's statement as to receiving the miniatures without the diamonds was correct. I would much have preferred that they had returned to me my own £50 they had seized at my home. It was honestly my money, because I had won it from a bookmaker, and told

them so; but when they cleaned out my home and found £180, the police claimed this, too, was part of the money that had been paid for the snuff-boxes when Tomlins was baiting the trap for me.

My astonishment over the return of the diamonds was visible to the inspector.

"What!" he exclaimed. "Did you not give us credit for being honest?"

"Oh, honest in that way, yes," I replied, and put the package in my pocket. What was the object of returning those diamonds to me?

The Fate of the Pictures

I LEFT London forever. I was not a criminal by instinct and wished to start life anew. On the Continent I joined my wife and remaining child. I wrote to Messrs. Bircham about the pictures, and this was the answer I got, dated November 22, 1911:

Sir: We have your letter of the 20th inst. Mr. Charles Wertheimer, as you may have learned, is dead, but we act for his executors, who are entitled to the pictures you refer to. The late Mr. Wertheimer, as you know, incurred some expense in pursuing information which he was informed would lead to the discovery of the pictures, but such information was altogether fruitless. If, as you say, you are in a position to put the executors in possession of the pictures in good condition, you will be paid against delivery a suitable sum.

Replying to this, I pointed out that the expense incurred was entirely misdirected, and the effort to recover the pictures was doomed to failure. I added that had Mr. Wertheimer been advised to fulfill faithfully his promises, at least as regards my wife and children, the pictures would have been returned unconditionally.

At the beginning of December, 1911, I had my last communication from Messrs. Bircham. They wrote:

The parties interested would be prepared to hand over in England, or elsewhere, £1,000 in cash in exchange for the delivery of the pictures in good condition. If you can do this you can communicate with us time and place. This offer will not be increased or altered, and will stand good for fourteen days only from date.

I had suffered too much: the risk of getting at the pictures was too great, the time to evolve a safe plan too short, and the price too little. I decided to have nothing to do with this offer. Only one man could I trust to get the pictures, and with my experience of the police and the other parties I could not be sure of a straight deal now. The safety of my friend would be jeopardized. Those who had humbugged me before were not going to have the last laugh. The pictures remained where they were hidden.

Years passed. In a foreign land I was working and living honestly, safe with the secret of my past. The world is small. One day I met a man who knew me in my younger days. This man was a well tried and true-hearted friend. Together we discussed a plan for getting the pictures out of England and selling them. We found a prospective buyer in a rich old Jew. I gave my visiting friend a letter of introduction to the friend in England in whose house the pictures were hidden, begging him to put the visitor up for a few days and show him around. The man trusted with my secret proved true to my confidence. After some difficulties he got at the back of the cupboard where the pictures were hidden, and, unsuspected by any one, got them out of England.

Handling once more those precious canvases, the whole drama associated with them came back in vivid detail before my mind. The brown paper that had been pasted over them came off easily and the faces of the two beautiful women looked into mine. Some of the varnish had come off, but the pictures were in a perfect state of preservation.

Our prospective buyer agreed to come with us to inspect the pictures, and if satisfactory to buy them on the spot, paying for them in cash. I lived in the top floor of a tall building. Outside the room in which the pictures lay, there was a tiled corridor. The Jew was to bring actual cash. At the appointed time my friend and I went for him, to conduct him to the treasure. We were both armed, and doubtless he was too.

We reached my home; I had sent my wife and child out. I directed my friend to stand at the balcony and watch the street door, which was open. The door of my apartment was bolted. When all was ready I produced the two pictures for inspection.

I do not know much about oil paintings, but the Jew was evidently an expert. He examined them from a distance, and then at close quarters. He posed them in different lights, and tested the canvas, while I waited. At length he spoke.

"They are badly injured," he said at last; and he declared that instead of the original price he could give only £1,200 for them. Finally he raised the price to £1,600, and with that I closed. Then he asked me for pen and ink so that he could write a check.

"No!" I said. "A check won't do. You were told to bring money. We won't accept a check."

As I said this my friend beckoned to me from the balcony. I went to him immediately, and he pointed out to me two men on the other side of the street. "Those two men have been walking up and down and looking at me nearly all the time I have been here."

"That looks suspicious," I replied, "especially as the old man hasn't brought any money and wants to give a check."

"No, no!" my friend answered; "that won't do!"

I had hardly got inside again when my friend came rushing in, and, taking me aside, whispered, "They have come up to the front door!"

"More treachery!" I said. "Guard the door!"

I snatched up the pictures, rushed into the corridor, closing the door behind me with a bang, pushed some papers in a corner, put the pictures on them, and struck a match. I applied it to the papers, and in a few seconds the masterpieces were hopelessly ruined. In another five seconds they were in ashes. As I watched the dying flare my first regret gave place to a feeling of satisfaction. Before this my children had perished, my present happiness was in danger. Liberty was more precious than paint to me.

I returned to the Jew. "My friend," I said, "there is nothing to be done now. You did not bring the money, and the business is at an end."

"But I did not like to bring such a large sum. Come to my house and I will give it to you."

"Too late!" I exclaimed.

"Too late!" he repeated. "Why too late?"

"Come here," I said, leading him to the window. "Who are those men?"

Then he told me they were friends whom he had asked to follow him. He had feared a trap.

"They are friends of yours, are they?" I remarked, "Well, they have ruined your business and ours! Come here. There are the pictures, those ashes in that corner!"

"My God! My God!" the old man muttered as we led him trembling from the room and showed him the stairs.

Saving a Nation's Body and Spirit

What American Food and Medical Relief Workers Did in Russia

By Nellie E. Gardner

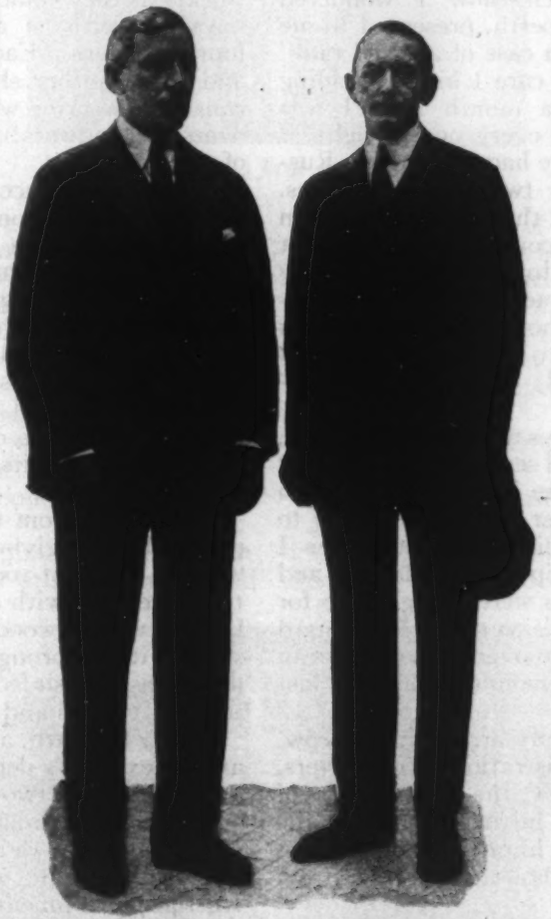
Of the American Relief Administration

THE Russian famine of 1921-22 was one of the most tremendous human tragedies of modern history. The humane endeavor that literally saved the life of the Russian nation will be ranked by future historians as one of the epochal struggles of all ages.

It is of the adventure and romance of America's relief in Russia that I want to tell. For five months I was in Russia as a member of the Russian unit of the American Relief Administration, under the direction of Colonel William N. Haskell. My job was to help write the story of the Russian famine and America's part in its alleviation.

In obtaining this material I witnessed all the phases of the American Relief Administration's work in the Moscow headquarters and the majority of districts from the Gulf of Finland to the Black Sea and from the Polish frontier to the Volga.

Let this story be one of contrasts—what I saw when I entered Russia in midwinter, at the peak of famine and misery, and what I saw when I departed in midsummer, at the beginning of revival of faith and hope.



Colonel William N. Haskell, Director of the A. R. A., and Colonel Henry Beeuwkes, Chief of the Medical Division

Millions of people had been snatched from death by the timely arrival of American food; empty hospital shelves had been stocked with every needed supply; fields had been sowed with American seed grain, which the spring rains and summer sun had ripened to a promising harvest; mothers' tears had been dried, and children had learned to laugh and play. Everywhere Russia's common people prayed for the welfare and eternal prosperity of America—the land that did not turn away and let them die.

First let me describe Russia when I entered it. After a month's residence in Riga, the beautiful capital of Latvia, known to history as one of the thriving merchant towns of the Hanseatic League, I was ordered into Moscow. On the February night on which I went down to take the train for Russia, the mercury was sinking lower than we ever dream of in the United States. But the stars were extraordinarily bright and seemed

very close—as they do in that latitude, which is as far north as Alaska.

Every experience and contact of the preceding month had lent interest to that night of departure from Riga. "Are you really going in?" was the question every one asked. "Aren't you afraid of lice and typhus and other things? Do you expect to come out alive? Of course you carry a gun!"

These questions were not reassuring, but I replied that I did *not* carry a gun; and I am glad to state that there was never a time in my subsequent five months' travel all over Russia that I had any need or desire for one. As an American woman, traveling with the credentials of the American Relief Administration, I was made to feel that I had the good will and protection of the Soviet government back of me. Officials of the railroad and the police always gave me every courtesy and assistance.

Under Protection of the Reds

BUT I could not foresee this; so, as I stepped aboard that candle-lighted, unheated car in Riga, and knew that I was "going in," my emotions were varied. The long wait next day, at Zastina on the Latvian border, and the inspection of the car at Sebesh on the Russian border, did not help my state of mind. As the Red soldiers, with peaked caps and red stars, approached my compartment, the Latvian train *provodnik* (porter) assured me dolefully that I was no longer under his protection, but from that time on would be at the mercy of the Russian *tovarishi* (comrades).

I recall with amusement now—though it was a perfectly serious thought then—how I wondered whether the red pillow in my berth, presented to me at Riga, would keep me safe in case of a "Red raid" on the train! And with what care I hid my folding camera beneath it, whereas a month later I was photographing everything and every one in sight!

Within half an hour after we had crossed the Russian border our train ran over two women's bodies. Our *provodnik* calmly remarked that there was seldom a trip between Riga and Moscow when six or eight people were not killed trying to hang on to the icy steps. All that night I heard men and women climbing over the roof of our car, shouting "*Tovarish!*" as they implored the conductor to let them ride. Occasionally a rifle-shot snapped; then the crowd became less noisy.

After four nerve-shaking days we reached Moscow, the capital of Soviet Russia and seat of Revolutionary power. I have never felt more biting cold than on that first day of Russian winter. It was difficult to get one's thinking powers acclimated. But when I realized that I had made the trip without danger, and that painstaking arrangements were being made for my housing,—even to the provision of a soldier guard for the house until it was turned over to the American Relief Administration as a personnel house,—I lost all fear of personal danger.

It was only five days after my arrival in Moscow, at the American Relief Administration headquarters, that I was sent down to Saratov, the "Queen City of the Volga." That was my introduction into the famine zone of Russia, and the impression of the next few days is vivid even to-day, thousands of miles from the Volga to the Hudson.

Some persons who have helped in the world's famine relief may think of disease, starvation, and death in terms of sights and smells. But I shall always carry the memory of sounds: the scream of the woman pushed under the grinding wheels of my railway car, trying to get into the city for food; the roar of the mob at night, fighting for places on the overcrowded train; the attempt of dying refugee children to sing when the door of their freight-car was opened; the aged famine victim's last call, "Madame!" as she outstretched her bony arms for bread and fell forward with a dying groan on the filthy wooden bunk in the refugee station; the constant hacking cough of the consumptive in every huddled group of human wrecks; and the wail of fifty orphan babies dying in an upper room. These human cries compose the dirge of the famine in the Volga Valley of Russia in the spring of 1922.

Their recollection would be unbearable, now, if it were not for my later impressions in Russia, when I saw this agony relieved, and the body and spirit of Russia revived by America's food.

Our party had its evidence of real famine within five minutes after arrival at Saratov. A train-load of one thousand children had pulled into the yards just ahead of our train. These orphans, picked up by the Soviet government in the worst famine areas of southeast Russia, were being transported to the "better harvest fields" of the north and west; but as winter progressed these "harvests" became harder and harder to find, with the result that many children died from starvation and exposure in these aimless migrations.

The door of one of the children's freight-cars was opened, and we heard weak voices in unison, and this is what we saw: Double decks of wide wooden shelves in each end of the car, with children packed as thickly as they could lie or stand. There were babies, boys and girls of all ages from infancy to perhaps fourteen years. Each was clad in a single garment, and wore neither shoes nor stockings. (We Americans were wearing woolen garments, heavy coats, and overshoes and furs!) There was a stove in the center of the car.

Each car was accompanied by a kind-faced, white-scarfed young woman whom the children called "Sister," and there was a woman doctor assigned to the train. At a sign from the Sister, the children began to sing another patriotic air. But not all of them could join. Some were ill with fever, probably typhus, and others, with blanched skin stretched over tiny bones, stared listlessly. Many whimpered and one or two cried aloud, drowning the song. One baby, too weak to whine or cry, turned its peaked face to the wall and shut its eyes. I am confident they never opened.

We drove from the railway station to one of the public homes giving overnight care to these sick waifs. The first room beyond the entrance-hall was the large bath with eight tubs; there was also a stove blazing with a wood fire. Each child had a bath as soon as it was brought from the train; but there were no means of disinfecting or delousing the clothing, to prevent typhus and other contagious diseases.

After the bath, all the children were put to bed, to await next day's departure. As we entered the large dormitory, with two rows of beds as close as they could stand, and an average of three children, boys and girls, in a bed, again we were greeted with the children's pathetic attempt to sing. Whatever question the Russian government representative asked them, they replied "*Horosho*" (All right).

In this children's home at Saratov we saw boys and girls of all ages; but in one of the homes at

A Ukrainian refugee family

It is this child's first American food

Before the famine in Ukrainia

"Blue Eyes" and "Red Head"

Famine beggars in Kharkov

Pokrovsk, across the Volga, we saw a roomful of refugee babies. Their faces were shriveled like old men's and women's of a hundred years. Gray-white, and emaciated beyond imagination, they staggered around the room, all the time whimpering and moaning. All were barefooted, wearing only one garment, a short cotton shirt. At the back, the bones of the spinal column stuck out like a jagged ridge. Little bellies protruded and little legs were swelled at the knees, with the usual starvation bloating. But the arms were straight as chicken-bones and they were not much larger.

Some of the babies were lying in bed; others were curled up on the floor; and still others were packed together on wooden benches around a bare table. Nearly all were crying—at least, those who had strength enough. One baby, apparently in great pain, shoved its fist into the stomach of the baby on its right, and the latter raised its weak hand and slapped the sick tormentor in the face. Another limped toward a bed and tried to burrow its head under the foot of the covers, but was kicked in the face by one of the occupants of the cot. Too weak to resist or hit back, it tried once more to lift its crooked legs into the warmth of the bed, but sank to the floor, to await the help of the kind attendant, or perhaps death. If it lived until the next day it would be loaded again into the freight-car for the next lap of the journey toward food that did not exist.

A few of the three thousand who met the first corn train to arrive at Simbirsk

American Kitchens for the Children

THESE shipments of children did not continue long after the American Relief Administration kitchens for children were opened in Russia's needy districts. The authorities soon realized that the best place to have an orphan fed was in its home town; so they gathered these orphaned waifs under shelter, reported their number to the American Relief Administration supervisor of the district, and began to receive regular rations of American white flour and other nourishing foods for them. Under this treatment,—one square meal a day,—I saw starved children changed from toddlers on

Little Ivan in his rabbit-skin cap had been coming to the kitchen some weeks when this snap-shot was taken

the edge of the grave to laughing, romping youngsters.

Two happy scenes are brought to mind, in recalling Russia's orphan population after America had been feeding them. At Simbirsk, an old Tartar stronghold in the north Volga Valley, with Richard Rein, Soviet president of the Simbirsk Gubernia (Province), and Stephen Tchernik, Soviet representative to the American Relief Administration, and Edward Fox of Pottsville, Pennsylvania, American supervisor of district feeding, I made a tour of the city's public philanthropic institutions. In a fine children's hospital, built on one of the highest bluffs of the Volga, we saw children being nursed back to health by means of proper diet. One little girl, a convalescent from pneumonia, had fallen asleep hugging the big cup, drained of thick brown American cocoa. An older boy, recognizing our foreign dress, said, in Russian: "Thank you, Amerikanskis, for this good food!"

Leaving the hospital, we went to one of Simbirsk's orphanages. As we entered the sunny room where the children were playing, they looked up, and with shrieks of joy came tumbling toward the short man who held the Gubernia's presidency. They grabbed his hands, hugged his legs, and fought for places on his shoulders. Kissing as many as he could at one time, he asked them if they were happy, and they shouted: "*Da, da, da!*" (Yes, yes, yes.)

President Rein asked the children to sing for us, and immediately a blue-eyed boy with yellow curls sat down at the piano, and the others formed in a row and began to sing. If you have never heard Russian children sing their native songs, you have no idea of the beauty of their voices. At a sign from their teacher, nine girls executed some of the ballet steps for which Russia is famous.

The grace of one of these little girls I shall never forget. This child, whose parents no one knows, undoubtedly possesses talent that will some day bring her to the première of the Moscow or Petrograd Ballet.

Americans are inclined to think of Russia as all winter and snow. Many times since I have returned, friends have said to me, "I can not imagine Moscow in summer! Does the snow really melt? Are there flowers and trees, and people dressed in white linen, as you say?"

Summer comes overnight in Russia. There is no spring. One day it is winter, and the next summer. And, as if the news had been whispered to them in dreams at night, when the seasonal change occurs, the women discard furs and goloshes and appear on the street, next morning, clad in thin white dresses, low shoes, and half-socks, and the men change their blue wool belted blouses for cool garments of pongee or white linen. Every one goes swimming in the rivers and small lakes, and those who possibly can do so move to one of the many log *datchas* (cottages) in the country.

Refugee Children's Summer Quarters

LAST summer was the first happy time some of the orphans of Moscow had ever known. Late in the spring the Moscow health authorities came to the district officers of the American Relief Administration and said they could send several thousand children to the country for three months, if the American Relief Administration could help out on the food supply. This was arranged, and one day in June I drove out from Moscow to observe results.

As our automobile turned off the Petrograd Chaussée, the famous old road leading from Moscow to Petrograd, and took a by-path into the pine and silver birch woods, I heard children singing and saw a double procession of boys and girls walking down the road. I followed them into the log villa where dinner was awaiting them. This villa was formerly a club-house in the fashionable summer colony of Moscow. Where ladies in diamonds, sables, lace, and ermine once were toasted over the wine-cups, bare-legged boys and girls were now eating rice and drinking bean soup and cocoa.

Inside the villa's spotless dining-room all was happiness. Shaved heads, bobbed heads, red-ribboned heads, and white-capped heads all were bent over basins of steaming beans. (For that was the bill-of-fare that day.) Between hot spoonfuls the children took big bites from small loaves of white bread allotted to each. When they looked up, it was only to grin.

Down in the kitchen I found another contrast.

The man stirring beans in the shining copper kettle had once been a famous culinary specialist at the Metropole Hotel, Moscow. He was glad now to have employment in this kitchen for a small money compensation and his daily meal. To have the assurance of work and regular food, this year in Russia, was the peak of hope and ambition.

I asked him how he liked his new work, and he replied: "Well, I never cooked for more appreciative guests, and I never had the plates scraped as clean before. But say, what are some of the new fancy dishes in New York hotels?"

There were eight summer colonies for children within fifteen or twenty miles of Moscow, to which the American Relief Administration was supplying daily food rations. Mr. Donald Renshaw was district supervisor of Moscow. When the Moscow Board of Health and Department of Education appealed to him for aid for the children, he had them come to his headquarters and submit to the usual medical tests for "pelidisi" and "sacaratama," by which physicians measured the condition of their blood, bones, and muscles, and estimated the need for supplementary feeding. As the result of this examination, meal cards were issued to five thousand boys and girls attending the eight summer colonies.

During their three months' outing the children kept on with their studies. They were taught by instructors from city schools, receiving special instruction in handcrafts and painting from nature.

Four Million Children Fed Daily

When you picture Russia's children now, think of them restored to health and recreated into normal, happy boys and girls by American food. During the peak of the child-feeding operations in Russia, the American Relief Administration had 28,000 children's kitchens, feeding 4,000,000 children daily. When the Americans went into Russia in September, 1921, they promised to feed 1,000,000 children. Even this seemed impossible to Americans as well as to Russians; but America has made good her contract with Russia's children.

America has also made good her contract with Russia's starving adults. Not long after Colonel Haskell and his staff of experienced relief men entered Russia—sent there by Herbert Hoover, chairman of the American Relief Administration—they realized that the famine was so widespread that feeding children was only half the obligation. Could one feed children only, and stand by and watch their parents die? Was it right to preserve a nation of helpless babies? Who would plant the crops? When would the famine end and Russia come back to independence and self-support?

There was only one answer. At the request of President Harding and Secretary Hoover, the Congress of the United States made that answer in December, 1921, when it voted $20,000,000 to send corn to Russia to feed that nation's starving men and women.

The boy on the left has just been fitted out with good American shoes; the other boy is hopeful

The Peasants of the Interior

CONDITIONS in interior peasant Russia, as seen by the van-guard staff of Americans last winter, have not been exaggerated. There are no words to describe the agony, depravity, and depths of the famine, and no means of estimating the relief sent by America or the number of lives saved. This fact stands out: by Easter, the back of the famine was broken and Russia was started on her uphill march to restoration.

Before that, during the winter's peak of misery, men and women had left their stripped homes, tramped with wooden staffs and empty sacks on their backs, and fought their way on trains, trying to get "somewhere." Food was all they asked—all they saw, just beyond, in their dreams. They died by the roadsides, perhaps by thousands. They crawled into railway stations, to be carried out in the morning. They hid in dark corners and covered their faces—for man seeks to hide his death agony from the gaze of his fellows.

Dead bodies lying on the roads, sidewalks, or railway tracks were so common a sight as to cause little comment.

Then began to spread the foul rumors of cannibalism—at first whispered and incredible; at last spoken boldly, and authenticated by unimpeachable testimony. Even the camera recorded the truth of these findings. The Russian government used extreme measures to stop the practice, punishing offenders with swift execution.

Everywhere, in Russia, I heard these stories of cannibalism. Mothers never permitted their children out after dark. Martial law was proclaimed for six weeks in Pokrovsk and Saratov, and children were forbidden on the streets after eight o'clock and adults after ten.

The robbing of pedestrians became a common practice. A sign chalked on a corner store building read:

"Until ten o'clock your clothes are yours. After that they are ours."

The story was told of a man seen running home screaming, late one night in Saratov, entirely naked. Although the snow lay deep on the ground, he had been robbed even of his boots! At the same time, I was told that, on one morning, fourteen murdered and mutilated bodies were found in the narrow side streets of Pokrovsk.

Perhaps some explanation of the pathology of cannibalism should be made to American readers. It should be remembered that a starving man is an insane man, not wholly responsible for his acts. In the widespread de-

pravity that must result from men and women living and dying in a mass, crimes against human life can not be judged by the standards of normal, decent civilization. Reduce a man or a woman to the level of the lowest animal, and he will react to the same impulses. The fight for existence is uppermost. It means the survival of the meanest, the quickest, and the cruelest.

Until you have lived in a famine area you have no real idea of what starvation means or how it works. It is a long, slow process. It takes weeks and months to complete the starvation of a man or a woman. An adult suffers longer and consequently undergoes greater agony than a child, during the many days and nights while the human body is eating its own reserve of bone and flesh. That is why we saw living skeletons walking in the famine zone.

Famine begins to show in the knees first. The shuffling gait comes even before the pinched compression of upper lip and nose, or the prominent cheek-bone. Whenever I saw a man or a woman walking down the street ahead of me, with knees crooked and sinking every few steps, I knew that person was a famine victim, not many days distant from starvation death. Before American corn trains arrived, there were hundreds of thousands—and maybe millions—of men and women shuffling with the hunger walk up and down the roads of Russia.

Both Sides of the Picture

I HAVE seen famine refugees in every state of existence in nearly every important city of Russia. I have looked out of the train window and watched a solitary stooped figure trudging painfully through the biting snow. I have met them in the Moscow streets, picking refuse from dumps. I have gone through refugee collection homes (*preimniks*) and concentration camps at Saratov and gasped at the foul stench from sick and dying bodies and shuddered at the groans of hunger pains from human beings of all ages piled on the floor or on bare wooden shelves, with no possible facilities for privacy, decency, or sanitation. I have watched them come—literally the lame, the halt, and the blind—to the refugee feeding—kitchen in Petrograd. I have picked my way, at night, through railway-station platforms of Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav, Sinelnikovo, and Djankoi, trying not to step on the shivering, stiffening bundles that I knew contained bodies, perhaps dead and perhaps alive. I have seen Lettish and Polish repatriates on their way home, at Sebesh and Minsk, being cleaned, fed, and deloused. I have seen dying women carried on stretchers from trains at Simferopol. I have gone down into the basement morgue at Alexandrovsk and counted thirty naked bodies brought there during the night. I have met the nurse on the stairway of the collection house, carrying the stretcher for the latest decease. I have photographed dead babies lying on the sidewalk of Atouzi, dead women on the main street of Simferopol, and a dead man lying on the ground not fifty paces from the common burying-ground at Theodosia, where the grave-digger filled a new mound with forty naked bodies every day.

In Moscow, Petrograd, Volga,—Great Russia, White Russia, Ukraine, and Crimea,—the picture was always the same: hunger, misery, journey's end, and death.

As I witnessed suffering in all its aspects, so I was privileged to observe famine relief in its varied forms. It was my good fortune to be in Saratov when the first American corn train passed through, en route for Astrakhan on the Caspian Sea, and in Simbirsk when the first American corn arrived for local distribution among the starving adults.

That day remains with me as one of the greatest experiences of my life in Russia. I had always thought of corn as one of America's richest agricultural products—as fodder for a hog or a horse. But on that April day I learned to estimate the value of corn in terms of human life. I never looked at the hard yellow kernels with such respect and admiration as when I saw them unloaded from small Russian freight-cars to crude log sleighs drawn up beside the warehouse door. The corn in those forty-three cars had come from the Mississippi Valley, by rail half way across the United States, to an Eastern seaport, then by ship across three seas,—the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Black Sea,—and again by rail from Odessa across the southern half of Russia. From its departure at Odessa until its arrival in Simbirsk, it had been under constant guard by Soviet government soldiers.

American food was the only food that was at all safe from pillaging in Russia last winter; there seemed to be a code of honor among starving thieves that American food products must not be touched. In one case that I know of in Sterlitamak, not far from Ufa in the Urals, a man was publicly tried, found guilty of robbing the children's kitchen, and publicly clubbed to death for his crime.

Three thousand peasants, representing several hundred villages, had come to Simbirsk to meet that first shipment of corn. Streets were black with horses and sleighs two blocks each side of the railway tracks. This train arrived just in time to save the situation for the Simbirsk Gubernia. Many peasants, who had driven into the city at the first rumor of the approaching corn train, came to the American Relief Administration headquarters and reported that they could not hold out more than one week without killing their only horse for food. They said they would wait if assured that food and seed were really on the way and due to arrive within a few days. When that train arrived on schedule, the good news was immediately telephoned to all the near-by villages, which sent their representatives to the warehouse to haul home the grain.

These peasants faced a real crisis. Representatives from twenty-seven villages had come to get the next month's food products for the children's kitchens, and now the corn for adults and seed for planting had arrived at the same time! Winter was ending (it was the first of April), and the roads would thaw any day and become impassable for perhaps two weeks. Which would it be—food for themselves, grain for their fields, forage for their horses, or dinner for their children? They took a vote, and unanimously decided to take home the children's food first, and trust to God to be able to make the return trip for their own rations.

"Manna" from America

MANY times during my stay in Russia I heard America's gift food called "manna." These devout, God-fearing peasants of the Volga could find no other explanation for the golden kernels that slid from the sacks into their sleighs, ready for the trip of many miles to the broad-paddled mill where it would be ground into flour for bread. Each village sent its whole train of sleighs to the warehouse at one time to

get its allocation of corn, and then they all returned together, whereupon two weeks' ration (one pound a day for each adult) was apportioned by the village head official to each family.

Returning to Moscow from Simbirsk, we passed through Inza, a small junction point. There was one of the most pitiable aggregations of refugees I ever saw. A little boy lay on a pile of logs, too weak to rise and get the food that was offered to him. When it was carried to him, he at first lay stupidly staring, and then ate it ravenously.

Six months before this picture was snapped the children had been pale and emaciated

One old man I shall never forget. He stood beside the station, eating dry black earth from a cup. We gave him some bread and told him about the American food that was on the way for Russia's hungry. He piously crossed himself three times, saying, "God bless all Americans." Many times I have wondered if the corn train overtook him, in his wanderings, before it was too late. Not long afterward the American Relief Administration opened a kitchen for refugees at Inza, where thousands received a daily portion of soup.

Almost overnight, after the arrival of the first American corn in any town starvation deaths ceased. From first one locality and then another, as the news was telegraphed that corn had reached its destination, this message would be followed by the word, "No one is dying from hunger here now." The American Relief Administration kept a steady flow of varied food products for children and of corn for adults into every district, and the first food train was always followed by a second before the supply ran out. Americans did not start anything in Russia that they did not finish. That fact seemed to make the deepest impression upon Russians who talked to me about American relief operations.

The Medical Relief Program

THE gigantic medical relief program that the American Relief Administration was able to carry out in Russia—through the gift of money and supplies by the American Red Cross valued at $3,600,000, and of surplus Army medical supplies by the United States Congress valued at $4,000,000—was as far-reaching and important as the enormous gift of American food.

Dr. Henry Beeuwkes, a colonel in the United States army, and physician on the staff of General Pershing throughout the war, was director of medical relief for the American Relief Administration. Under his supervision, medicines and surgical and hospital supplies, including drugs, instruments, bedding, soap and disinfectants, were distributed to more than 300,000 institutions, serving uncounted millions of people.

A band of forty American men in the medical personnel accomplished this gigantic task.

Dr. Beeuwkes's chief assistants were Dr. Walter P. Davenport of Minneapolis and Dr. John H. Dawson, also army physicians detailed to foreign service with the American Relief Administration. Dr. Dawson was in charge of the huge central medical warehouse at Boinia, a suburb of Moscow, and there he took a corps of several hundred Russian workmen who did not know one word of English and trained them so that they knew, by sight and sound, such technical terms as iodine, sodium bicarbonate, chloroform, thermometers, pillow-cases, blankets, carbolic soap, and delousing-machines, could make an inventory of the warehouse at any moment, and could pack everything from safety-pins to X-ray plates, and send them to their proper destination.

I visited hospitals in many cities of Russia that were entirely without such ordinary surgical necessities as chloroform or ether before the American Relief Administration came. A patient undergoing an operation had to purchase his own anesthetic and bring it with him, or else have it performed without anything to deaden pain. Of course, in major internal operations this was impossible, but I was told that in amputations of arms and legs it had been done. Doctors were losing heart as they saw the institutions they loved gradually running out of everything needed to care for the sick; nurses were dying of typhus and starvation; patients were dying for lack of food and warmth and medicines.

I have inspected these institutions later, when bare boards had been replaced by beds, clean sheets and blankets covered the patients, the sick were clad in night-clothes, operating-rooms were adequately equipped, and a daily food ration was given to all. Under these conditions doctors and nurses regained their lost courage and hopefully attacked the problem of nursing and curing Russia's sick. Clinics for the free distribution of drugs to fill local physicians' prescriptions filled a much-needed want. The American Relief Administration's inoculation program, whereby ten millions were immunized against smallpox, cholera, typhoid fever, and

The relief workers had to combat countless cases of exhaustion

para-typhoid "A" and "B," was one big feature of the summer's medical relief.

The medical relief rendered to Russia is not transitory. Without it many hospitals would have been compelled to close their doors. It is the desire of Dr. Beeuwkes and his medical assistants to supply to all worthy institutions in Russia—those that are willing to clean up and give proper care to patients—sufficient medical and hospital equipment to enable them to function for at least two years after the American Relief Administration departs. By that time conditions probably will have improved so that the Russians can pick up and carry their own burdens and replace stocks as they give out.

"The organization of homes for refugee children, and the immeasurable improvement in the condition of child life, with the great numbers that have been saved from death, will justify the entire American Relief Administration's effort in Russia, even if nothing else were accomplished," said Dr. Beeuwkes to me, in an interview in Moscow.

Food Packages from Friends

ONE form of relief, not classed as charity, but having tremendous significance in Russia, was the distribution of food packages, of one hundred and twenty pounds each, to those families who were the beneficiaries of relatives, friends, philanthropists, and organizations in the United States. On January 1, 1921, the American Relief Administration offered the first Russian food remittance for sale at its headquarters, 42 Broadway, New York City, and between that date and the middle of November more than nine million dollars' worth of food—mostly in ten-dollar packages—had been transported overseas by the American Relief Administration and delivered to the persons named by the purchasers. Russian food remittances are still purchasable and form one of the most effective means of helping needy men and women. They are sold at a slight profit, which is turned over to the child-feeding fund.

Russia's harvest, not so large as at first was hoped, will be insufficient to feed the entire population this winter. So the American Relief Administration, staying on the job over there until the feeding of the hungry is completed, will render help to those weighed down by famine's aftermath. This will include continued medical relief, and food allocations for from one to two million children. Some adult relief may be necessary too.

Clothing is now one of the most drastic needs for Russia. Colonel Haskell cabled from Moscow last October that hordes of boys and girls required shoes, stockings, and other garments if they were to be carried through the intense cold of the long Russian winter and enabled to attend the feeding-kitchens.

Two means of furnishing this essential clothing are undertaken by the American Relief Administration: one by gift outright, and one by sale—that is, by enabling American purchasers to buy clothing and send it, through the delivery medium of the Administration, to destitute friends in Russia. In accordance with the first method, the American Relief Administration purchased and shipped its first consignment of 250,000 pairs of shoes and stockings in graded sizes for children in November; in accordance with the second, it placed on sale clothing remittances whereby an American may purchase a twenty-dollar remittance and send it to Russia, for presentation at one of the many district stations. This twenty-dollar clothing package will contain enough woolen cloth for a man's suit or a woman's dress; muslin for four suits of men's or women's underwear; flannelette for two men's shirts or women's shirt-waists, and thread and buttons for making the garments. The system of purchase over here and of delivery over there is the same as for the food remittances.

The Moral Effect on Russia

I SHOULD like to include a word regarding the moral effect of America's response to Russia's call for help. Fewer than two hundred American men of courage, efficiency, kindness, and daring went into Russia under Colonel Haskell, and put over this stupendous task of life-saving for 10,500,000 people scattered over one of the biggest and least accessible nations of the globe. And they did it in spite of snow, ice, mud, blocked ports, broken engines, crippled transportation, and the discouraged morale of the native population. Within a few months they had increased the number of freight-cars at their disposal from fifty to eight thousand and had unloaded eight hundred thousand tons of food from eight seaports and shipped it overland into an area as big as the United States.

If this great work of mercy had occurred in the era of the Greeks or the Romans, it would have been immortalized in epic poetry. Because it was done by present-day America in a systematic way, and because $60,000,000 was spent in the achievement, it is likely to be classed in the mind of the average American as a commonplace enterprise—like the shipping of leather hides or cotton or harvesters. But because this corn and wheat and rice and beans and milk provided the only sustenance for millions of human beings, and because it was sent free, without asking thanks or reward, this gigantic program of America's famine relief in Russia assumes the quality of a crusade.

What does Russia think of Americans and America, now that this job has been accomplished?

Because the American Relief Administration—as an organization and as individual members—kept faith with the people of Russia and its government, the word of Americans is now trusted in the land of the Slav. Unless you have been in Russia since the Revolution, and have seen with what suspicion the Russians regard the outside world and how they probe beneath the surface of every good deed for ulterior commercial or political "motives," you can not appreciate what a tribute this confidence is and what a foundation it has laid for future trust and mutual understanding.

They no longer fear us. At first they kept their eye on all of us, but no one objected to that—least of all the Americans. I heard one member of the American Relief Administration, in conversation regarding our obvious watching by the *cheka* (secret police), say: "The more they watch us, the better we like it. They will finally become convinced that we are telling the truth and playing fair. We came here only as 'baby-feeders,' and that is all we intend to be. We are not dabbling in politics or government."

Russia and the Russians will never forget America's gift of the year 1922. The story of the "Ahra" (as the Russians call the Relief, from the initials A.R.A.) will live in the folk-lore of the moujik of the steppes as well as in the official records of the Kremlin statesmen who will direct Russia's future. Some day, some way, I am confident that the United States will be reminded of the Slav's gratitude for that gift of food.

The Stolen Passports

An Account of the Search for the Men Behind the Algerian Murderers

By Major C. E. Russell

Illustrations by L. F. Wilford

A jardinière filled with rocks had been dropped from a roof

I HAVE told the story of the Algerians who by night robbed passers-by, sometimes robbed and murdered pedestrians on the streets of Bordeaux, always taking the victims' passports; and I have told how we caught the guilty pair in a trap in which I was the bait.* When they were guillotined we fancied we had successfully put an end to a dreadful chapter of crime. As a matter of fact, we had committed a tremendous blunder. For those dead Algerians could have given us information that would have saved the Allies incalculable injury and relieved us of weeks of untold worry.

Why neither the French Chief nor I had inquired more minutely into the motive behind those many robberies and murders will always remain a mystery to us. Through heart-breaking weeks, as we toiled and moiled along, our stupidity was driven into us.

The tale of our final success sounds like some great playwright's plot; but the grim artist was fate.

I change a few superficial and insignificant circumstances in order to hide the identity of certain persons. Otherwise, excepting a few externals that do not count, my story is based upon facts.

A PERSON walking along Rue St. Catherine in Bordeaux during the war never would have given 629 more than a passing glance. From the outside the house appeared little different from any other house on the street. But those who were privileged to enter through those barred doors knew that within lived a family whose hospitality could not be exceeded in France, a very happy and prosperous family whose head we will call Lapin.

Lapin was a wine merchant who specialized in exporting Bordeaux wines to Spain and importing Muscatel wines from Spain. His warehouses, along the water-front, were large, and his business so extensive that he owned and operated two coasting schooners to transport his wines. Lapin claimed to be a Basque, one of that mysterious race of people who inhabit the southeastern part of France adjacent to the Spanish frontier.

*"The Algerian Murderers" appeared in McClure's Magazine for November, 1922.

Madame Lapin was a typical Frenchwoman, beautiful, keen of mind, well educated. The two daughters, who had had the advantage of three years at a private school, spoke excellent English, and were much sought after by our younger officers of the base. At the time of which I write, Lillian, the younger, was engaged to one of our officers attached to the base headquarters; while the older daughter was wearing the ring of a French major of artillery who was with his battery at the front.

IT was my good fortune to receive an invitation to this home for dinner on the same day on which I had witnessed the execution of the two murderers. Gladly the invitation was accepted. It would allow me to forget, for a while at least, the horror of that guillotine.

When dinner was over, Lapin suggested that we go into his den to smoke our after-dinner cigars. At first the conversation was on general topics; but after a while Lapin brought back the scene of the execution when he abruptly asked:

"Major, you were present at the execution this morning, were you not?"

"Yes; and I hope never to be called upon to witness another like it," I answered.

"Did either of the condemned make a statement before he was put to death?"

No, I told him, and went on to say that we had no light on why those scoundrels had murdered so ruthlessly. Though the subject was dropped, I wondered idly why Lapin was interested in the gruesome affair.

We had, as we thought, written *finis* to the Algerian murder story and filed it away; but one day, some weeks after the execution, I received an urgent summons from the Colonel in charge of our department at Tours to take the first train and report to him for a conference, and without fail to bring the entire file of the case of the two Algerians.

What under the sun could the Colonel want with this file? I wondered, as I sat in the train en route for Tours. Surely that particular case had been completed. But, to make sure and refresh my memory, I opened the file and went through all the papers once more. After several hours' study I gave up guessing what was on the Colonel's mind.

I was not left long in the dark, however. Although it was well after working hours when I reached Tours, the Colonel had a motor-car waiting for me, and I was taken at once to his office. The first greetings were barely over when the Colonel broke out:

"Major, there's the very devil to pay! In some way, one of the passports that those Algerians stole has shown up in the hands of a German spy. The worst part of it all is that the spy would have got by with it if the one chance in a hundred had not occurred: when he presented himself at Mentone for admittance with this passport, it so happened that the officer in charge of the Intelligence office there was a man who had been in Bordeaux at the time the rightful holder of the passport was murdered. He recognized the name on the passport and at once placed the spy in the prison, where he now is. We have been unable to learn from this spy how the passport came into his possession. What did you do with the passports you found when you arrested those two men?"

"The strange part of it all is, Colonel, we did not find a single passport. We took it for granted that they had destroyed them all."

"Well, here is one they didn't destroy!" And he handed me the passport taken from the body of the man we had found murdered under the Bassens bridge.

It seemed as if I would never hear the last of those two Algerians! First, they had come near causing an open break between the French and the Americans at Bordeaux; then they had stripped me of all my clothes; and even after they were dead and buried, they reappeared to haunt me!

"Possibly, Colonel, this one passport was found and used again," I volunteered. "Surely there can't be any more around."

"All rot!" exploded the Colonel. "How do you account for the fact of this passport's getting from Bordeaux to Mentone, if you think it was found in Bordeaux?"

Here, indeed, was a facer. That the passport was genuine there was no doubt. But how it could have worked its way clear across France, around to the Italian frontier, and have shown up in the hands of the Boche spy, was beyond me. Apparently the Chief read my thoughts, for he continued:

"You are wrong, Major. I believe that in your district there is a gang employed in the procuring of passports for Germany. And it is up to you to catch them before they do any more damage. Did you quiz those Algerians as to what they had done with the passports they took from their victims?"

Right here I realized that there had been a bad slip. I had to admit to the Colonel that, in my anxiety to convict the men of the murders, I had overlooked the question of the passports!

Colonel R—— was one of the finest officers that it has ever been my good fortune to serve under. His criticisms were always tempered with a thorough understanding of human nature. When I admitted that I had never considered the question of the stolen passports, the Chief countered:

"Major, you have made just that much more work for yourself. It is up to you to retrieve the mistake. You will have to work all the harder to do it. But locate the missing passports and you will clear our department of the stigma of having made such a blunder."

ALL the way back to Bordeaux that night I studied the case. When morning came and I was once more back in my office, I was forced to admit that it looked hopeless, now that the two who might have helped us were dead.

I had scarcely reached my office when the Chief of the French Secret Service was announced.

"Read that!" he sputtered, as he passed me a letter from his headquarters in Paris.

The wonder is that the paper was not consumed, so fiery was the language of that letter. It demanded, in no uncertain terms, an explanation as to how a passport belonging to a murdered man had fallen into the hands of the German Secret Service and had shown up at Mentone.

I looked at the Chief—the Chief looked at me. And then, in almost the same breath, we both said what blank idiots we had been in not following up the passport clues.

"My dear friend," I consoled, "you've nothing on me, for I've just returned from a session with my Chief at Tours on this very matter, and I know exactly how you feel. However, it's of no use to lament over what might have been. It's up to us to get busy and see if we can trace that passport through Bordeaux to Mentone."

In the early part of the war Germany had made use of passports from neutral countries when she sent her spies into France. But by 1918 her welcome was worn out at the foreign offices of those countries; also, the Americans and French were carefully checking up any one who tried to enter with a neutral passport. In consequence, Germany was getting desperate for passports for her spies, and was willing to adopt almost any scheme or pay almost any price to get authentic ones.

"I think our first work should be to check back on those two Algerians," I said to the French Chief, in a conference. "We must see if we can connect them with any one here at the base. If we can do this, we may be able to get a lead that way."

So it was arranged that the French Chief and I should send out men to comb the town for traces of the associates of the dead Algerians. It sounded less difficult than it really was; and after a week of futile effort we were forced to admit that we had not made even a start. If any of the denizens of the under-world knew aught of those two men, they took pains to keep that knowledge to themselves.

I WAS forced to fall back on a man of the under-world who had been of assistance to me in the past. An appointment was made for this man, Gaston, to meet me at a secret rendezvous. Here he was given all the facts known to us. After a few minutes' consideration, he volunteered the information that somewhere he had heard talk among the Apaches that one of their number had recently shown up with plenty of money. Possibly this fellow might know something about the passports. Gaston promised to investigate this angle of the case for me, and said he would tip me off if he learned anything definite.

During the time I was in Bordeaux I made my headquarters at the Hotel Gobineau, on the square. Here, a few nights after my conference with Gaston, he came, much excited.

"Major!" he exclaimed, "I have located the man you want. He is called Pedro, is a frequenter of the 'House of Glass,' and while drunk he has boasted to me that he knows all about those passports! He is there now. If you hurry you may catch him."

The "House of Glass" was located in the Rue de Gal, which was probably one of the worst streets to be found in any civilized country. Only the lowest types of men frequented it. It was famous as the hangout of the Bordeaux Apache, more feared by the French police than even his brother the Paris Apache. All the streets leading into the district were "off limits" for our troops, and every one of them was heavily guarded with military police. Even our military police had to travel in pairs.

And this was the neighborhood that Gaston suggested I enter at two o'clock in the morning! Our police could be of no assistance, for the force was so small that we had to withdraw the men at midnight to allow them to secure some rest. Even in the early evening, when it was necessary for me to enter this street, I always had at least three heavily armed military police with me. I knew better than to go prowling around there alone—much less go into such a notorious place as the "House of Glass" at this time in the morning after an Apache named Pedro!

I called my friend the French Chief on the telephone and briefly told him of the new developments. He agreed to get together some of his men and to stop at the hotel for me.

He must have encountered some difficulty, for it was almost three o'clock before he arrived. We started at once, all of us dressed in civilian clothes. Just before we entered the street, the Chief suggested that we spread out and travel in pairs, so that the sharp eyes always on the watch might not spot us and give the alarm before we could reach the house.

Our precautions were useless, however. Before we had passed a quarter of the way down that street some one recognized us, and the cry of "Police!" sent every last one of those human rats scurrying into his hole. Breaking into a run, we quickly reached our objective. A sharp rap on the door, a curt demand to open in the name of the law, and we were in the house. Leaving one of our escort to guard the door-keeper, so he should not give the alarm, we started for our man.

To reach the dance-hall, where we expected to find him, we were forced to pass down a long corridor. As we walked along this corridor, it became evident whence the house derived its name: the floors, the walls, and even the ceilings were made of mirrors. At last we stood on the threshold of the most notorious dive in Bordeaux.

There is one thing about a French crook that is most peculiar. I have seen him face a gun without flinching; I have seen him deliberately walk up to a desperado armed with a villainous-looking knife: but the sight of a whip in the hands of a determined man will make him cringe.

We were all armed with revolvers, although they were not visible; and as we stood in the doorway surveying that crowd, all they could see were the heavy riding-crops in our hands—but that was enough.

Then some one recognized the Chief. The music stopped with a crash. The Apaches, with their girls, all stood in sullen silence, with their eyes focused on those whips, awaiting the word from us. The Chief gave a gruff command, and every one of that crowd stepped lively and arranged themselves around the tables at the rear of the room. We established ourselves at a table near the door. One at a time, the men were ordered to come to our table for examination, passing out through the corridor after we were finished with them.

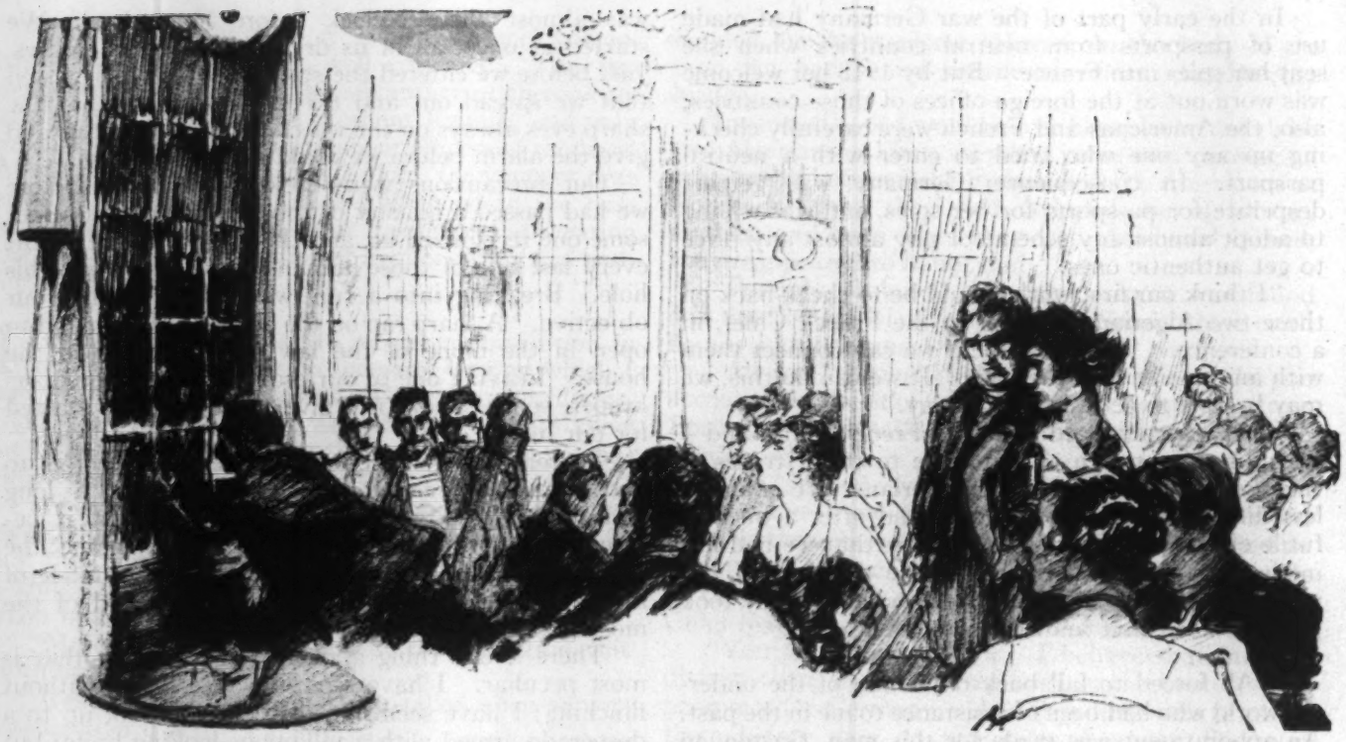
WE were about half-way through with this examination when we were startled by the crash of glass. A man whom they told us was Pedro, realizing from the nature of our questions that we were after him, took a desperate chance and jumped through a window.

As we rushed to the window and peered out into the darkness, we heard the roar of a motorcycle. Our quarry was gone!

Chagrined at our failure, we returned to the hotel. While waiting for daylight preparations were made to take up his trail. We were now doubly anxious to get our man. Not only did we want to question him about the passports, but we also wanted to know how it happened that he was riding an American motorcycle—for we had recognized the exhaust as that of an American machine.

A telephone message to the Casino brought to the hotel Lieutenant Simmons and four men, all mounted on motorcycles. As soon as it was daylight, these five were sent off in different directions to comb the various roads leading out of the city, and to ascertain, if possible, the direction taken by the fugitive.

Late that forenoon, Lieutenant Simmons telephoned that he had picked up the trail on the Paris-Bordeaux Boulevard. He had found a French



We were startled by the crash of glass—Pedro took a desperate chance and jumped through the window

peasant who had heard the motorcycle roar past his house as he was getting up; he said that apparently our man was headed for Paris.

The lieutenant was instructed to keep close on the trail, and to telephone to us from time to time as he had news of the fugitive.

We next heard from Simmons at Limoges. "The man stopped here for gas, and left in the direction of La Cortine; I believe he is headed for Paris," he reported.

"Keep after him, lieutenant!" I advised. "You can overtake him, I'm sure."

Simmons followed the trail to La Cortine, where Pedro had stopped for supper. Reaching Nevers at about ten o'clock that night, and stiff from being so long on the motorcycle, Lieutenant Simmons was dumfounded when the policeman on the bridge that led to Nevers told him that no one had entered the city on a motorcycle since noon, when he came on watch. Simmons stopped at Nevers only long enough to get something to eat and to replenish his gasoline and then turned back for the night ride to La Cortine,

BY daylight he was once more on the trail of the fugitive. Before night overtook him again he had picked it up, only to find that, instead of heading for Paris as he had supposed, Pedro had swung directly over the mountains toward Clermont-Ferrand. At Clermont-Ferrand Simmons discovered where Pedro had stayed overnight. The landlord of the inn said that the man had inquired the way to the frontier.

Riding south Lieutenant Simmons finally found where the fugitive had turned east and was headed for Marseilles. Simmons felt repaid for his hard riding when, within two miles of the city, he found the motorcycle abandoned. The gas-tank was empty. A peasant said he had seen the man start toward the city on foot.

At last the end of the chase was in sight!

We now knew that we had Pedro in Marseilles. On advising us by telegraph of the results of the chase, Simmons was instructed to secure the abandoned motorcycle and to remain where he was until we could arrive.

During the time that Lieutenant Simmons was trailing Pedro across France there occurred two incidents which convinced me that I was dealing with a desperate band.

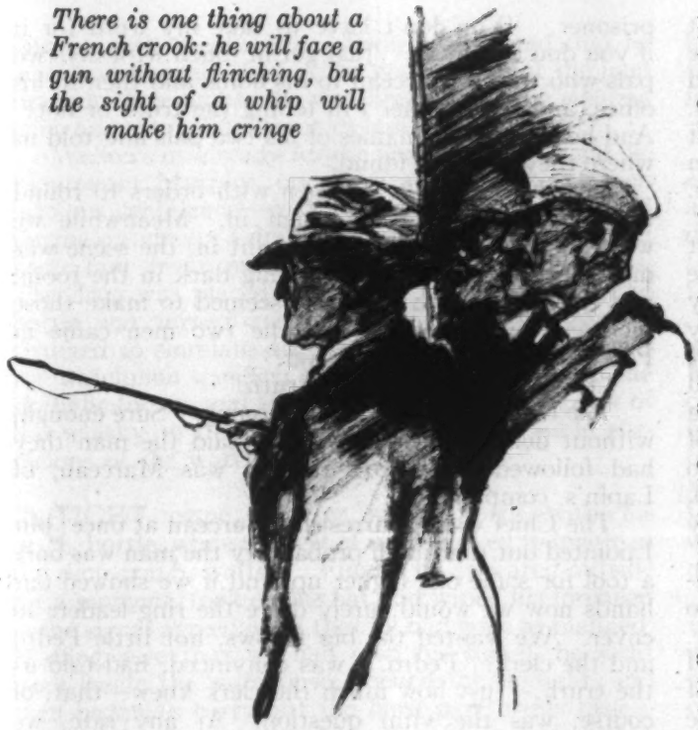
On the next day after our visit to the "House of Glass," Gaston came to me, very much excited, and said:

"Major, I beseech you to drop all investigations of the passport fraud and leave town for a while! You are a marked man. Last night I overheard a man and two Apaches plotting your death. There is some powerful influence at work which has the money to carry out its purpose, and they will murder you unless you get away at once!"

I did not doubt the sincerity of Gaston's warning, but I put it down to idle threats. Gaston's warning came back vividly to me that night, however. Working on another case, I was returning to my quarters late, and was taking a short cut through one of the less frequented streets, when suddenly I heard the report of a revolver, and a bullet whistled past my head. I dropped to the ground, pulling my automatic as I did so. A second later another shot whizzed by overhead, and I saw the flash of the gun. I opened up with my gun then, and by the time I had emptied the first magazine and was inserting the next there were no more flashes from around that corner. I did not go man-hunting again without a body-guard.

The next murderous attempt was made on the night following the shooting. I had been spending the evening with Monsieur Lapin, and was on my way back to my hotel when I was startled by a crash directly behind me. A large jardinière filled with heavy rocks had been dropped from the roof of a house. To all appearances, it was intended for me; and if it had landed on my head it would surely have killed me. But it was my good fortune that whoever dropped it had miscalculated the speed at which I

There is one thing about a French crook: he will face a gun without flinching, but the sight of a whip will make him cringe



was walking—it struck about two steps behind me. A hasty blowing of my police whistle brought to my aid both French and American military police on the run. But, although we searched several of the houses, we couldn't find a clue as to who had once more tried to kill me.

THE necessary trip to Marseilles came as a relief from these several attacks. Gaston was urged to spread the report throughout the under-world that, afraid of my life, I had fled the city. Thus I hoped to throw my enemies off my trail. Because the two attempts upon my life convinced me that my movements were watched, it was decided that the French Chief should not leave Bordeaux with me, but instead should go on to Poitiers by train. There I picked him up, and together we went on to Marseilles.

While we were waiting for Simmons to run Pedro to his lair, the French had not been idle. They had secured a very good description of our man.

"The man we want, Chief," vouchsafed my companion as we were seated in the office of the head of the French Secret Service in Marseilles, "is about twenty-four years of age, tall and slim, smooth-faced, of a very dark complexion, with eyes that seem to be looking out through slits in his head. He has extra heavy black bushy eyebrows that meet in the center of his forehead, giving him an ugly look; he has a scar across his right cheek; and his left ear has been mashed at some time, presumably in a fight. When he jumped through the window he had on a dark suit, no vest, a gray flannel shirt, and a cap with a patent-leather visor. For fear of alarming him, my friend here, the Major, and I will lie low while your men make the search."

Even with all our precautions, in some way Pedro was tipped off that the police were after him. He decided to try to make his escape from the country by shipping as a sailor on one of the numerous steamers sailing from this port.

During the war the French had a regulation that called for a list of all crews sailing to be supplied to the port officer twenty-four hours before the boat sailed. This regulation was the undoing of Pedro. He did not know of it; and when the captain of the steamer he shipped on presented his list to the port officer, the French detective whom the Chief had stationed at the office for just this purpose picked out Pedro's name from the list.

That night, under cover of the darkness, we took the French port officer's motor-boat, and, with plenty of French police along, we went out to the steamer.

Pedro was nobody's fool. He was on the watch. As we started up the gang-ladder he took another desperate chance and dove overboard. Tumbling back down the ladder, and in our excitement getting in one another's way, we finally got the boat started and began the hunt for the fellow. The other steamers in the bay heard us and their search-lights flashed out. By the glare of their lights, we soon saw our man swimming lustily toward one of the other boats. As he grasped the rope thrown him, we nabbed him and pulled him into our boat. As he reached for his knife, one of the French policemen hit him on the head with the butt of his revolver. When Pedro came to, he was in double irons.

After putting him in the French prison at Marseilles for the night, we went back to our hotel. Next morning we started with our prisoner upon the return trip to Bordeaux, arriving there very late on the night of the second day. And, before any one was aware of our return, we had Pedro safely confined in prison.

All the way from Marseilles to Bordeaux, the French Chief and I had taken turns in questioning the prisoner; but we had been met at every turn with sullen defiance.

"Never mind, Major," consoled the Chief, after we had tried in every way to induce the man to talk; "I know how to make this fellow tell us what we want to know. Just wait until I get him back in Bordeaux!"

And, sure enough, a few days later the Chief sent for me to come over to his office and witness the examination of Pedro. The examination was held in a room that I often had called the "Chamber of Horrors." Pictures of executions by the guillotine, of hangings, murders, and other forms of sudden death adorned the walls.

Into this room Pedro was brought, and seated in a chair in such a way that he constantly faced a large picture of the guillotine. In a quiet voice the French Chief, drawing largely upon his imagination and the few slender threads of evidence that we had untangled, built up a masterly case against the prisoner. Then he told Pedro that the penalty for such a crime was death on the guillotine. He described such an execution.

Pedro's bravado gradually disappeared; and as the Chief unfolded the scene of death the prisoners' face assumed an ashen hue.

WHEN the Chief had worked Pedro into such a frame of mind that he knew Pedro would tell us what we wanted to know, he turned to the officer who had the prisoner in charge and said:

"That's all! Take him back to his cell."

"Don't send me back there!" cried Pedro. "Wait! I'll tell you whatever you want to know if you'll only spare me!"

"Then," thundered the Chief, "tell us the whole truth about your connection with those two Algerians and the stolen passports!"

"Yes, Chief, I will!" sobbed Pedro.

We settled ourselves in our chairs. At last we were to hear the truth about this mysterious and puzzling case.

"One night," began the prisoner, "when I was at the 'House of Glass,' a rough dressed chap came in. He looked like a sailor. After looking the crowd over, he came and sat down at the table where I was. After a few commonplace remarks, he suggested that we have a bottle of wine. I told him I hadn't been able to afford a bottle of good wine for a long time. But he was willing to buy it, so I ordered a bottle.

"The man said that his home was in Paris, but he'd been to sea for the past three months. He seemed to have plenty of money, and I let him buy a second bottle. After some general talk, he suddenly reverted to what I'd said about not having any money. He asked me if I'd like to make a lot of money; and when I told him I would, he suggested that we get a private room where we could talk without fear of being overheard. As I needed money, I told him to give me five francs and I would see what I could do. He passed over the money, which I slipped into my pocket. I quickly secured a room.

"Seated there, with the third bottle of wine between us, this man once more asked me if I'd like to make a lot of money and could keep my mouth shut. Naturally, I told him yes, and asked him how it could be done. He then told me he wanted to get hold of some passports for a friend, and would pay me one hundred and fifty francs apiece for them.

"I hadn't seen that much money since the war started, and I fell for his suggestion. Only the day before I'd seen two Algerians out on the Rue de Gal trying to sell a passport, so I said that I might get a few. I told him to return the next night and if I could I'd have several for him.

"AS as soon as he left, I started hunting for those Algerians. I found them the next morning, and bought the passports for fifteen francs apiece. When I gave my visitor the passports that evening, he paid me the promised price and urged me to get more.

"After that night I acted as a go-between for this man and the Algerians. I was making a good thing out of it, too, until those cursed American police broke up the game and sent the two Algerians to the guillotine.

"I noticed one or two things while dealing with this man which led me to believe that he wasn't what he wanted people to believe he was. In the first place, his hands were too soft to belong to a sailor; then, every once in a while he'd speak like an educated man. I got two of my pals to follow him and see where he lived.

"You can imagine my surprise and joy when my pals told me who he was. I knew then that I needn't work any more; I could bleed him for all he was worth."

"All very well," dryly commented the Chief. "But who is he?"

Pedro was by now enjoying the situation he was in,—the center of the stage, as it were,—and he hesitated before answering. Then, in a slow voice, he said:

"The man you want is Marceau, the chief clerk for Paul Lapin, the big wine merchant!"

If Pedro had named the mayor of the city, I should not have been more astounded.

"Absolutely impossible!" exclaimed the Chief. "Why, Marceau has been Lapin's confidential man for years. You will have to do better than that, friend Pedro, if you want to escape and save your neck!"

"I can't help what you think!" sullenly replied the prisoner. "You don't have to take my word for it if you don't want to. Just get in touch with my two pals who traced Marceau to his home and then to his office, and see whether I'm telling the truth or not!" And he gave us the names of his two pals and told us where they could be found.

The Chief sent out his men with orders to round up these two and bring them in. Meanwhile we waited. As the men were brought in, the scene was most impressive. It was growing dark in the room, and the shadows on the walls seemed to make those pictures almost lifelike. As the two men came in Pedro turned to them and said:

"Boys, tell the Chief the truth!"

The Chief took up the questioning. Sure enough, without delay or hesitancy, they said the man they had followed at Pedro's request was Marceau, of Lapin's company.

The Chief was for arresting Marceau at once; but I pointed out that in all probability the man was only a tool for some one higher up, and if we showed our hands now we would surely drive the ring-leaders to cover. We wanted the big fellows, not little Pedro and the clerk. Pedro, I was convinced, had told us the truth. Just how much the clerk knew—that, of course, was the vital question. At any rate, we would keep him shadowed to prevent his escape. We could afford to spend some time checking up Marceau.

Thus it was finally agreed upon that we should have him followed. For fear that Marceau might recognize a shadow from the French department, I put two of my own men on the job.

Marceau, it appeared from their reports, led a well ordered life. When he left his home in the morning, he always went directly to the warehouses on the water-front. Here he usually remained until noon, unless he went on some errand to the banks or to the stores. Promptly at noon, every day, he left the warehouse and went to the same café, and even sat at the same table. At six o'clock each night he closed the office and turned the warehouse over to the night watchman and went home. Once or twice a week he would saunter forth for an evening at the theater.

In order to catch this very elusive man, we determined to instal a dictograph in the office of Lapin's warehouse.

OUR first move was to bring in an officer who was not well known at the base and have him secure rooms as near the warehouse as possible. We called in Lieutenant Gorman for this part of the work. Fortunately for the prompt success of our plans, Gorman found two elderly Frenchwomen living in the house adjacent to the warehouse who were glad to add to their meager income by renting him two front rooms.

The next step was to get our instruments installed and our wires concealed inside the warehouse. This should have been the simplest part of the work; and it would have been, had it not been for that night watchman. He was a real watchman, was that man! We tried several times to catch him asleep, but in vain. After one of us had had a narrow escape from being shot while trying to enter through the skylight one rainy night, we determined to adopt another expedient to get in.

The next man to come in on the case was Sergeant Baxter. He was to pose as Lieutenant Gorman's orderly, and his task was to become acquainted with that watchman. American cigarettes were the open

sesame with the French. Soon he reported that he was so well established in the good graces of the man that for three nights the watchman had been stealing wine and smuggling it out to him.

We were now ready for the next move. To aid us, Lieutenant Murphy, our medical officer, was taken into our confidence—with the result that he prepared for the watchman a draught that he guaranteed would keep him from meddling with our arrangements. The drug was placed in a bottle of whisky, and the bottle was turned over to Baxter. Baxter was instructed to simulate drinking at first; but as soon as the watchman was *hors de combat*, he was to open the skylight for us, and then return and drink enough of the whisky to drug him also to allay possible suspicions of the watchman.

NIGHT came. Baxter sallied forth with his bottle, while the rest of us, prepared to hustle in the dictograph, waited. Finally he appeared outside for a moment, took off his hat and wiped his forehead —the signal agreed upon that all had gone as planned. Making sure that we had seen his signal, he went back inside the warehouse, opened the skylight, and then began to carry out the hard part of his task—the drinking of the drugged whisky, afterward smashing the bottle so that none of the contents would be available should the watchman become suspicious.

The moon shining down on Bordeaux that night certainly witnessed a strange sight: four American officers in uniform stealing over the roof of a warehouse, dropping down through a skylight, and working feverishly against time to get their instruments in place and the wires strung and well concealed before the watchman was able to throw off the effects of Murphy's dose. Murphy had carried out his part of the work well, however; for by two o'clock in the morning we had completed our work, the necessary wires had been brought across the roof to Gorman's room, and the whole installation so carefully concealed that we felt sure that no prying eyes would ever discover it —and still the watchman and Baxter slept on.

The mate observed the arrest of his captain, and later he slipped away to warn Marceau

The watchman was the first to throw off the effects of the drug, while Baxter still lay stupefied alongside of a pile of glass that once had contained doctored whisky. Throwing cold water in Baxter's face, the watchman aroused him, and the two cursed the whisky that had had such a bad effect upon them.

OPERATING a dictograph is a tiresome and monotonous proposition in any circumstances. In this case the operator had to sit with the receivers clamped to his ears every minute of the day. No one could tell when the conversation would shift from general topics to those pertinent to the case. The French Chief, realizing the nature of the work and the strain it was upon a man, early sent one of his men to alternate with Gorman in listening in.

For several days all these men heard were conversations dealing with the buying and selling of wines. Then came the day that we were to secure what we had been so patiently waiting for. The captain of one of Lapin's ships had come in from a trip to Spain with wine. Throughout the forenoon the talk was continually of wines, wines, nothing but wines and the wine market! But after lunch, when only the captain and Marceau were in the office, our man was startled to hear the captain say:

"Marceau, the big chief in Spain wants us to make a determined effort to secure more passports. Excuses will not go any longer with him. You know, they have a habit of tipping off the French when one of their workers rebels and refuses to obey orders. While the chief didn't say so directly, I fear that if we don't comply with his wishes, that's just what he will do. We must try to get him some more passports!"

"You know as well as I do," replied Marceau, "that since the two Algerians were caught it has been next to impossible for me to secure a single passport. However, I will try my best to do as you say!"

Now, at last, after weeks of waiting, we had a real clue as to how these crooks had worked: the two Algerians had stolen the passports, committing murder when necessary to get them, and had sold them to Pedro, who in turn had passed them on to Marceau. Marceau had forwarded them by the captain to the Germans in Spain.

STILL, we wanted to catch them in the act. We decided to use Pedro as the medium through which we would work. He was to be given his chance to escape the guillotine, provided he would play fair and do as he was told. Pedro was once more brought into the "Chamber of Horrors."

This time the Chief adopted the silent method: for fully five minutes the only sounds to be heard in

the room were the scratch of the Chief's pen and the labored breathing of the prisoner as he twisted and turned to avoid gazing at the picture. Feeling at last that Pedro was in the proper frame of mind, the Chief turned and, still without speaking, himself sat studying the picture. Then, with a shudder, he slowly turned to the prisoner.

"Doesn't look very inviting, does it, Pedro?" he queried. "I wonder what a fellow thinks as he sees that knife descend?"

"For pity's sake, Chief," cried Pedro, starting from his chair, "don't send me to death! I'll do anything you want me to, if you'll only save me!"

Still maintaining his rôle, the Chief said that he would see what could be done, and he ordered Pedro back to his cell.

"Let him think it over for a while," commented the Chief, as the door closed after Pedro.

The plan was to release Pedro (under proper surveillance, of course) and supply him with plenty of faked passports. He was to go back to the underworld and get in touch with Marceau. After Marceau had the passports, we would follow them through to Spain and then seize the entire gang.

AFTER the plan had been re-checked to provide as far as possible against failure, Pedro was once more called in from his cell, and the part he was to play was carefully explained to him. He was told that upon his following our instructions depended his escape from the guillotine, and that if he did exactly as he was told his connection with the stolen passports would be forgotten and he might go free. Naturally, Pedro protested his willingness to go through with the plan and his loyalty to us.

Yet I could not allow myself to trust Pedro's word. Experience had proved that a crook's word was good only as long as it suited his purpose. Consequently, I suggested that two of the Chief's men go with him, staying with him night and day, to prevent his double-crossing us if he were so minded. There is nothing that will keep a man of Pedro's caliber straighter than the knowledge that there is always some one hovering in the background, near enough to catch him if he goes wrong. To make assurance doubly sure, I sent two of my men to watch Pedro; these two were unknown either to that worthy or to his French shadows.

Pedro was handed six passports. The door of the prison opened to him. He was now free once more to enter the haunts that he loved so well. And he headed straight for the "House of Glass" to wait for Marceau to appear.

Pedro had not been free two days before Marceau put in an appearance. Eagerly he questioned:

"How did you escape from the police? Do they know what you have been doing? Is it perfectly safe for us to go on with the work?"

To all of which Pedro had a good answer ready. Appearing satisfied with Pedro's answers, he asked:

"Can you get me some more passports? It's very important that I have some at once!"

Pedro promised to do the best he could, and suggested that Marceau meet him at his (Pedro's) room the next night. We wanted Marceau to go to Pedro's room, for there we could secrete men who, while remaining unseen, could see the actual transfer made. And so it worked out.

Promptly on time the next night, Marceau turned up, the money was paid, and the passports delivered. As soon as Marceau was out of sight, Pedro's two shadows brought him back to the prison for safe-keeping.

While the two French detectives were making sure of our witness, my two men took up the trail of Marceau to learn what he did with the passports. We had our trouble for our pains, however, since that wise gentleman went directly to his home and there remained.

At nine o'clock next morning Marceau appeared at the warehouse.

We were at the dictograph early; but we had a long wait before we were able to hear anything of interest.

Marceau seemed possessed: it was wine, wine, wine all the time.

Every one in Gorman's room was getting on edge from the strain—and no wonder—when Gorman, who was listening in on the machine, suddenly yelled:

"Shut up, everybody! That captain has just come in!"

The captain began to tell Marceau about the grape crops he had seen that day in the country, when Marceau broke in with:

"Hang the country! Listen to me! I met my man again last night, and he had six passports for me. You may have them to take back with you."

"Fine! That's good work!" exclaimed the captain. "The big chief will be mighty glad to get them. Now, let us hustle my cargo on board, so I can get away. If possible, I want to sail by Saturday on the afternoon tide."

"I'll do it if we can get the men to work fast enough," promised Marceau. "In the meantime I'll keep the passports here in the safe until you sail, when I'll slip them to you with your manifests."

OUR patience had been well rewarded. Had we not good evidence against at least two? But were there others? That question still bobbed up to plague us. Should we chance it and arrest the pair now, or allow them a little more rope, in the hope that they would not only hang themselves but bring the rest to the rope? We still believed that there were others. We could keep Marceau under such close watch that we could grab him when we wished to. We also felt confident that the sea captain, if he were not alarmed, would return, since he must bring the money for the passports. Consequently, it seemed best to let them run a little longer.

As long as we had decided to hold our hand for the moment, we deemed it wise to try to place one of my men on that boat to make the trip to Spain. Maybe, we thought, if we can see the delivery made in Spain, we can get from the receivers the lead to the master brain behind this scheme.

Who was the one to send? Who had the nerve to carry through such a dangerous mission? Who would be willing to sail in a boat filled with cut-throats who would as lief kill a man as take a drink of water? Who was qualified to go? Who among us could speak both French and Spanish? And at that moment, as if in answer to my questions, the door of my office opened and in walked Lieutenant Johnson, just back from leave—the very man for the task. Utterly fearless, cool under the most trying circumstances, never allowing anything to ruffle him, speaking both French and Spanish, strong enough if called upon to perform the work of a sailor—he was indeed well fitted for the task!

Never was one of my men *ordered* to go on a dangerous mission. Rather, the case was laid before

him, and then the choice was his. It was so in this case. And Johnson jumped at the chance.

"Why, Major," he urged, "the sea voyage is the very thing for me. Surely you wouldn't consider any one else for the trip? When do I sail?"

"Not so fast, my good friend!" I smiled at his enthusiasm. "First we must look over the ground and see how we can get you on that boat. Every last blessed one of the crew is a Basque. You could no more pass as a Basque than could I as the Admiral of the Great High Fleet."

"Oh, that's an easy one! We can still fall back on the old deserter's dodge, you know. If that captain is the type I think he is, he'll be only too eager to earn a few pennies to transport a poor fellow, dead-scared of the war, to some port where there is no danger. You just give me the money, and I'll do the rest!"

Money *will* work wonders, and Johnson was as good as his word. He came back later on, and told us that he had struck a bargain with the captain, and was to get his baggage and be ready to slip on board at ten o'clock that very night.

Lieutenant Johnson's trip on that vessel was merely one example of the quiet bravery that prevailed throughout the military police organization. No one could tell what might happen. His mission might be discovered. If so, there would be a quiet knife-thrust and a drop overboard.

Although Johnson knew all about the hazards, he never flinched, and was on the spot when the captain appeared to take him on board.

The trip was an uneventful one. The wind was right, and they made a quick run to Spain. Johnson put himself out to win the friendship of the captain, and succeeded so well that when the boat arrived at her port in Spain, the captain offered to take Johnson to San Sebastian and there introduce him to those who could aid him. Johnson accepted, and so was present when the passports were turned over to Myers, one of that famous "group of five." The next day, when the captain received a sealed envelope from the same man, Johnson also contrived to be present.

"Tell Marceau," ordered this man, "that we are pleased with his work."

Since Johnson had learned all that he wished to know, he prepared to return to us. Watching his chance, he slipped over the mountains and, one day, came smiling into our office and reported.

We had secured what we wanted.

We determined, when the boat returned, to close the trap. We knew that that letter the captain brought would give us the needed clues. Accordingly, plans were made to seize the captain as soon as he set foot on shore.

LATE on the second night after Johnson's return, she came in, and by the time she was tied up to her dock we were ready for the captain. The tide had kept her off the bar at the mouth of the Gironde River until long after the warehouse was closed, so we knew we had a chance to read that letter before we moved further.

As the captain stepped ashore, we seized him and hustled him off to the French Chief's office. Here we searched him, and found the letter carefully sewed into the lining of his great sea-coat, which he had nonchalantly thrown over a chair as he entered the office. Eagerly we tore it open. Now we would know who was at the bottom of the plot—who, other than the three already implicated, were reaping the rewards of dishonor!

Alas! Our hopes were doomed to failure. The envelope contained merely the pay for the passports, twelve thousand francs, and a letter telling Marceau that if he would secure as many more they would the next time give him an additional bonus.

Disappointed by the failure, we prepared to go to Marceau's home and arrest him. We had overlooked one detail, however: we had neglected to put a guard over the crew. The mate observed the arrest of his captain, and later slipped away in the darkness to warn Marceau.

When we arrived in front of Marceau's house, our men on watch there reported that a man had come running to the house a short time before and, after a few minutes' conversation with some one at the door, had gone on down the street. They had seen Marceau come out, look around, and go back inside.

Had our man escaped at the last minute? we wondered, as we went up the steps and knocked on the door. In response to our knock, the door was at once opened, and we saw Marceau's old servant standing there.

"Come in, gentlemen; Monsieur Marceau is expecting you. However, since he is ill in bed, he requests that you go up to his chamber."

Nonplussed by the turn events had taken, we followed the old man up the stairs.

WHEN we were ushered into the chamber, our wonderment was further increased to see Marceau reclining in bed.

"Pray be seated, gentlemen. I know why you are here, but it won't do you any good. You can not harm me now. See this!" He held up a small empty bottle. "That bottle contained a deadly poison. I had always vowed never to allow you to arrest me if I were found out. So, as you came up the stairs, I swallowed the contents, and I have but an hour to live!"

I was for sending for a doctor; but the French Chief, who had taken the empty bottle from Marceau and had carefully noted the odor it emitted, shook his head.

"A doctor will be of no use here, my friend. The one to send for is a priest!"

"Silence, gentlemen," broke in Marceau. "I have but a short time to live, and I want to clear my conscience before I go. I am going to ask you to listen without interruption."

The scene in that death chamber, that night, is forever engraved upon my memory. Not an incident will I ever forget: Marceau, the calmest one in the room, lying there in his bed, propped up with pillows, and facing an inevitable death without so much as the flicker of an eyelid; the French Chief and I, seated beside the bed, fascinated by the coolness of the little clerk; Marceau's family and servants in the background, quietly weeping; the French detectives scattered around, watching in amazement the tragedy being enacted in the room.

"Gentlemen," began Marceau, "in the early part of this year we were having trouble with our agent, a man from Dax, who had represented us in Spain for several years. I made a trip in one of our boats to see if I could straighten out the matter. It proved a disastrous trip for me. I was unable to collect the large amount of money that was due the firm, and was about to start back with the failure of the house of Lapin staring me in the face. If we could not get that money we should have to close our doors. I knew

that such a catastrophe would kill the man who had been my friend and benefactor—Lapin.

"The last night came, and with it came our agent, accompanied by a man whom I afterward learned was at the head of the German spy system in Spain. He said he had heard about my difficulty, and that he was in a position to help us, provided I would do something in return for the favor. This man represented to me that he had charge of the neutrals in Spain, and that all I had to do was to secure passports, so that some of the neutrals interned there could pass through France on their way to their own country. He said they were afraid to travel by water, because of the submarines.

"It seemed a small matter, and as the reward was great, I accepted. The man handed me enough money to lighten our burden, and promised more when the passports were safely delivered into his hands.

"How I have rued that day! It would have been far better for me to have gone back empty-handed. How little I knew the type of man I was dealing with! I sent him three passports, and thus placed myself in his power. Ever since that time my life has been a hell upon earth. He has, by continual threats of exposure to the French authorities, forced me to do his pleasure. He has always kept his word, however, as to the payments, and by the use of German money I have been able to carry on the business and pay our bills.

"Your presence here proves that you know how I have been recently securing these passports, so let us pass over that phase of the matter. About three weeks before the two Algerians were caught, Lapin overheard the captain telling me of an interview he had had with that brute in Spain. Lapin threatened to expose me. But I soon convinced him that he himself was deeply involved, although innocent of actual participation in the crime. Had he not used the money in his business? But I alone am guilty, gentlemen! Do not molest my good friend Lapin!

"YOU," he said, turning to me, "I have tried twice to kill. I learned you were present on the night Pedro was forced to jump through the window to escape, and the thought came to me that with you out of the way I would be safe. I hired thugs to shoot you; they failed. Then I myself tried to kill you by dropping a jardinière filled with rocks upon your head; but again you were lucky and escaped."

"Yes; but how did you know that I would pass through that particular street at exactly that time?" I asked, for that attempt on my life had been a mystery to me.

Marceau could not help smiling at the thought of how he had kept me guessing for so long.

"That was easy! You were at Lapin's, making a call, and I was there also—in the rear of the house. I saw you come, and it occurred to me to drop the rocks. All I had to do was to watch you, and when you started to go, I slipped quietly up to the roof of Paul Lapin's house and made my way over the others until I came to a good place to drop the jardinière. While you were so excitedly searching those houses, I was quietly sitting in my friend's house, chatting with him."

During the recital of this story the poison had been getting in its deadly work. Marceau was steadily growing weaker. His face had turned deathly pale, while the perspiration was streaming over it. He could scarcely speak above a whisper now, and his body was racked with spasm after spasm of pain.

Just as I was about to speak, there came a rap on the door. It was quietly opened, and the good father from the near-by church stood in the doorway.

All except the family and servants arose and quietly passed out into the hall, where we waited for the end.

Finally the priest came out and, in a hushed voice, announced:

"Gentlemen, Monsieur Marceau is no more."

And thus passed away one who, in faithfulness to a friendship, had sacrificed his loyalty to his beloved France—unwittingly at first, it is true.

THIS surely was a night of the most astounding happenings. When we arrived at Lapin's, the house was illuminated from garret to cellar, and behind the shades we could see several persons moving.

I had now to enter the home of a friend and to arrest him for treason—the most painful duty I was ever called upon to perform.

Still it had to be done. *Guilty, yet not guilty*, he must pay the price just the same. But he never did!

The same man who had carried the news of the captain's arrest to Marceau had, by his orders, told Lapin of the circumstances. The news of the arrest and the consequent discovery of the exact situation by the authorities proved too much for Lapin's weak heart. When we were admitted, we were met at the door by the doctors, who told us that Paul Lapin was slowly dying.

The French Chief dismissed his men, while he and I slowly walked back to my hotel. Sitting in my room, smoking to quiet our nerves, we discussed this very remarkable case.

No good would be accomplished by bringing its facts before the courts, since grim death had taken a hand. Instead, we would file it away and allow it to pass out of mind.

We were prompted to do this out of respect for the families of the two dead men, especially since Lapin's two daughters were engaged to marry two officers each of whom was loyally serving his country.

Then it occurred to me that we still had the sea captain to deal with.

"But what about keeping that sea captain quiet?" I asked.

"Leave him to me! I will close his mouth forever!" grimly replied the old Chief.

And I did.

A Roosevelt Episode

A Writer Who Gave the Colonel Pleasure Is Abundantly Rewarded

By Frank Parker Stockbridge

THEODORE ROOSEVELT was keenly appreciative of courage and square fighting. The only thing he hated worse than cowardice was injustice. So it was inevitable that he should have been interested in the case of Colonel Shepard. The story of this affair has been heretofore unrecorded.

Colonel Charles O. Shepard wearing a decoration from the King of Portugal

Colonel Charles O. Shepard was the personification of those soldierly qualities that have made the *beau sabreur* a fascinating figure for the romancers. A red-faced little bantam-cock of a man he was. That his hair and mustache had turned gray with the passage of years made no difference in his lifelong custom of wearing the one precisely and neatly parted in the middle and the other as neatly and precisely waxed and pointed at the ends. Nobody had ever seen him with a single hair out of place; still less was it conceivable that any one had ever seen him with a speck of dust on his perfectly fitting, smartly cut coat, or with his trim little boots unpolished. He carried his five feet three with the dignity and assurance of a six-footer—and six-footers thought twice before provoking him.

As a boy of twenty or so, this dapper, soft-spoken little person had been given a commission as Lieutenant of Volunteers in the Union Army, and was assigned to a regiment recruited from among the toughest element of what was then the tough East Side of New York. One imagines a grim sense of humor on the part of whatever board or commission was responsible for this detail. One can almost hear the echoes of Pantagruelian laughter at many a messtable when the word went around that little Charlie Shepard had been sent to command the "bully boys" of the Bowery.

What happened he set down long after the Civil War. The stories, published in the middle '90's under the title "In a Bowery Regiment," were signed with a pen-name, "Captain Musgrove Davis"; but Colonel Shepard's friends knew them for his own recital of the intimate personal side of his war experience.

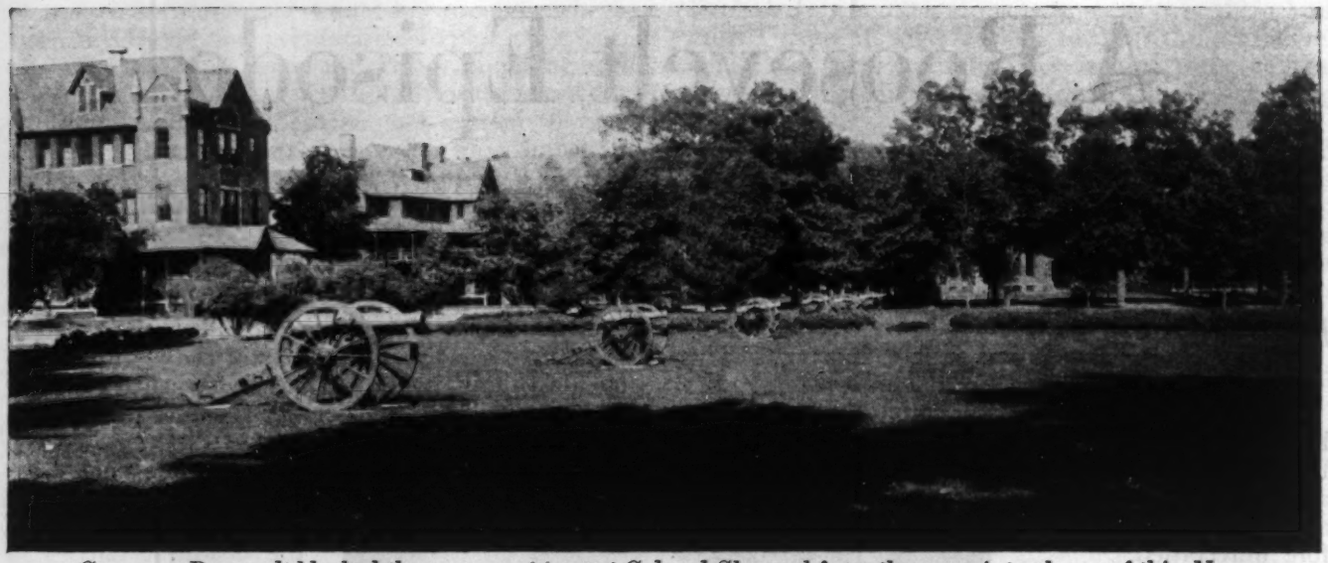
Suffice it for the purpose of this record that he turned the open contempt and hostility of the men of his command to frank respect and the warmest personal devotion, though he had to thrash a bully or two, contrary to the "Articles of War" and the standards of discipline, in the process; that he led his company and later his regiment through some of the deadliest battles of the war; and that he came through unscathed, with his uniform as speckless, his hair as precisely parted, and his mustache as neatly waxed as when he went in, and, what was of more consequence, with the affectionate devotion of every man of the regiment.

Father to His Bowery Boys

OUT of what would have been an impossible situation for a different type of man, the dandy little officer had evolved into an almost paternal relation with his Bowery followers. He had won their respect when he had refused to be bullied; he won their love when he refused to let them be imposed upon. To him they were his "boys," to wrong one of whom was to wrong him; to them he became that mixture of father confessor, Dutch uncle, and comrade that makes men succeed as parish priests, party leaders, and generals.

It was an accident of politics rather than any deliberate purpose on any one's part to put a real fighter in the place that resulted in Colonel Shepard's appointment, in the middle '90's, to the position of superintendent of the New York State Soldiers' and Sailors' Home at Bath. There had been few occasions, in civil life, for him to display his fighting qualities; doubtless those responsible for his selection knew nothing of this phase of his war record. Nobody who had anything to say about it wanted that sort of man in that particular job. They thought they were appointing a nice, rather dandified little old gentleman to a quiet, easy post befitting his years and party services.

It was not in Colonel Shepard's nature to be content with an easy berth, and it was not long before it became apparent that conditions at the Soldiers'



Governor Roosevelt blocked the movement to oust Colonel Shepard from the superintendency of this New York State Soldiers' and Sailors' Home at Bath

Home were anything but quiet. Rumors of trouble at Bath began to seep through western New York. Soon they crystallized into definite reports of charges about to be preferred against the new superintendent.

A Buffalo newspaper sent a reporter down to Bath to investigate. He found a rejuvenated Colonel Shepard, "Captain Musgrove Davis" come back to life! Once more he was the dandy little Colonel, fathering, scolding, and fighting for his "boys." They, these doddering graybeards, flotsam and jetsam of the pension roll, were no less his personal friends and dependents than had been the Bowery boys of '63. They were entitled—"By gad, sir!" the Colonel emphasized it—to the best treatment, the best food, the best medical care—yes, and the best funerals—that the money a generous State had furnished for the care of its dwindling galaxy of heroes would buy.

They were all heroes to him. Bath had never thought of them in that light. As far as Bath thought at all of the Soldiers' Home, charmingly situated in the Steuben County hills on the outskirts of the no less charming village, it was as a local institution, put there for the benefit and advantage of the village of Bath. Its inmates, as far as they were anything more than a lot of rather frowzy old men with a marked tendency toward funerals, were a solid block of Republican votes that could be relied upon to keep Steuben County "safe." Thus the politicians; while the tradesmen of Bath found profit not only in the sale of food—and coffins—to the institution, but around and after the quarterly pension days in dispensing tobacco and other commodities to the inmates. There were always saloonkeepers ready to turn pension checks into whisky; and viler harpies of both sexes, peddlers of morphine and cocaine, purveyors of every form of vice, flocked to Bath at pension-time.

Some of the old war veterans to whom Colonel Shepard became guardian and comrade

How the Trouble Started

WITH the best of intentions, most of the Colonel's predecessors had failed to effect any material improvement in the situation. Control of the home, and of the superintendent's job when his limited tenure of office expired, was vested in a board of managers, largely local to Bath. It is not, and never was, charged that members of the board personally profited from any of the forms of exploitation to which the old soldiers were subjected, but any effort to curb the rapacity of the vultures was bound to tread on the toes of some one who had a friend on the board.

The fireworks had begun simultaneously with Colonel Shepard's arrival to take up his residence in the superintendent's cottage. Instead of having a special dinner prepared, he had ordered a meal sent in from the regular messtables. "Anything that's good enough for these boys is good enough for me," he said—and meant it.

The Colonel and Mrs. Shep-

ard went hungry to bed that night, and the next day there was an explosion in the village. A dapper little red-faced gentleman with a waxed mustache was telling the tradesmen who supplied meat and groceries to the Soldiers' Home precisely what he thought of them. His remarks, to the mingled scandal and delight of the villagers, were punctuated with expletives reminiscent of Virginia battle-fields and the Bowery regiment. And that was but a beginning.

What the reporter learned about the conditions Colonel Shepard had undertaken to remedy, for the protection and happiness of his "boys," was merely what might have been learned about conditions in any eleemosynary institution, could one but get at the truth. Nowhere is "man's inhumanity to man" more ruthless, nowhere does human greed flaunt itself more shamelessly, than in the exploitation of groups of unfortunates who have become reduced to the status of "inmates."

Petty thievery and graft among the attendants at the home was checked and the worst offenders dismissed, thus swelling the number of those who had a grievance against the new superintendent. A peculiarly low and mean form of graft, consisting in supplying inferior coffins at exorbitant prices, was unearthed and broken up. Cleanliness was enforced, and for the first time in years the poor old soldiers found their personal health and comfort the chief consideration in the management of the home.

There were some who did not like the discipline that Colonel Shepard's reforms necessitated; there was the usual percentage of inmates, always to be found in any institution, whose chief source of happiness lay in nursing grievances, real or imaginary, against every one in authority. So it was easy for the Colonel's enemies to concoct a set of charges against the superintendent, accusing him, among other things, of cruelty to the inmates.

Governor Roosevelt as he looked in 1899, when he went to the aid of Colonel Shepard

Tears rolled down Colonel Shepard's cheeks as he told the reporter of this charge. To other accusations he was ready with evidence to expose their fraudulent character; but that he should have to defend himself from such a charge as this, that any one could believe that he was capable of cruelty to his "boys," was heart-breaking. To the credit of the board of managers be it recorded that these first charges were dismissed as soon as presented.

But the Colonel's enemies did not rest; he had touched them in their most tender spot, their pocketbooks. They accused the Colonel of being a drunkard, a charge based upon entire ignorance of his capacity. Doubtless this latter had a limit somewhere, but none of the Colonel's friends had ever known him to reach it. Then they tried to get a clergyman to move for his dismissal, on the ground that he was irreligious and profane. The clergyman spent a day at the home. It was one of Colonel Shepard's busy days, and the expletives exploded with more than their usual frequency. To the credit of the cloth be it said that the clergyman declined to serve as cat's-paw for the Colonel's traducers.

"I have seen—and heard—Colonel Shepard in action," he said. "I have seen an example of unselfish devotion to the welfare of others that shames me, a professed servant of mankind. I never knew before that a man could swear to the glory of God!"

The publication of an account of what Colonel Shepard had done, and the motives of his opponents, made it necessary that the board should find cause that it could justify in public for the superintendent's dismissal. Such cause it could not find in the accusations launched against him; but the bitterness of his enemies did not abate, and pressure of many kinds and from many sources was brought to bear on individual members of the board. There were some square, courageous men among them, who believed in Colonel Shepard and stood by him; but they were in the minority.

Roosevelt Was on the Board

"THEY are trying to force me to resign, by all sorts of petty regulations calculated to curtail my authority and curb my activities," he wrote to his reporter friend. "But, by the Lord Harry, they can't make me quit and leave these poor boys to the mercy of the wolves!"

Then, in the autumn of 1898, Theodore Roosevelt was elected Governor of New York, and the reporter who had written of affairs in Bath went to Albany as the legislative correspondent of his newspaper when the new Governor's term began on New Year's Day, 1899. Colonel Roosevelt had been Governor less than six weeks when, on February 10, a letter reached Albany from Colonel Shepard:

> The annual meeting of the board is to be held on February 11, at nine o'clock [he wrote]. My term expires then, and they are not going to reappoint me. I gather that the new Governor is our kind of folks, and I wonder if he knows what is going on here. You know, he is ex-officio a member of the board.

That last fact was news to the reporter, and it was to the Governor when it was conveyed to him. But he didn't see how he could leave Albany on a moment's notice for a three-hundred-mile jaunt across the State, merely to attend a meeting for routine business.

"But it's more than routine business, Governor,"

explained the reporter. "There's a good man in trouble."

Governor Roosevelt listened patiently as conditions at the Soldiers' Home were outlined to him, much as they have been in this narrative.

"Why, you must know about Colonel Shepard, Governor," the reporter concluded. "He's the 'Captain Musgrove Davis' who wrote 'In a Bowery Regiment,' and that was his own story."

"Captain Musgrove Davis!" exclaimed the Governor. "I should say I did know that story. It was in McCLURE'S MAGAZINE. It's a corker! By George!" he went on, striking his right fist into the palm of his left hand, a favorite gesture of emphasis—"by George, I'll go!"

He called for his military secretary, Major Curtis Treadwell.

"Find out what train I can get for Bath to reach there by nine in the morning," he said. "Make arrangements for the trip, but don't let it leak out. I don't want it advertised."

"May I go along, Governor?" asked the reporter.

"I can't play favorites, you know," was his reply. "But I can't prevent you from taking the same train," he added, with a twinkle in his eye.

EVERYTHING WAS UNANIMOUS

THE mercury dropped all that day. At eleven o'clock that night Major Treadwell and the reporter, pacing the platform at the Delaware & Hudson station, waiting for the Governor, killed time by timing the station thermometer. It fell from zero to five below in fifteen minutes. As the train sped southward down the Delaware Valley, the temperature continued to drop. Crossing the mountains that divide the Delaware waters from those that flow into the Susquehanna, it grew so cold that the steam-pipes conducting heat to the private car in which the Governor was traveling, at the rear of the train, froze and burst! This occasioned an hour's delay at Binghamton. It was apparent that the Governor could not get to Bath in time for the meeting if it were called at the scheduled hour.

"Telegraph the chairman of the board that I am on the way," he directed, as he finished his breakfast. "It will be too late now for any one to frame up any deviltry, and I guess they'll wait for me."

The reporter sent a similar telegram to Colonel Shepard. A fast team of horses hitched to a cutter filled with buffalo-robes was waiting for the Governor when the train pulled into Bath. The three-mile drive at a temperature of twenty below had enough of the element of adventure in it to key the Governor up to a high pitch.

He greeted Colonel Shepard with boyish effusiveness, then entered the board room and closed the door behind him.

"I think we may do better without an audience," he said, with a smile.

An hour later the board and the Governor emerged. Colonel Roosevelt's famous teeth glistened in the frosty sunlight. Some of the members of the board were smiling; these were Colonel Shepard's friends. Some called for their sleighs and drove rapidly away.

"What happened, Governor? Was there a row?" asked the reporter.

"Oh, no; no row at all. I never saw anything so harmonious. In fact, everything was unanimous, I believe?" he added, turning an inquiring glance toward the secretary of the board.

"Oh, quite unanimous," responded that functionary. "The Governor made a little speech telling the board how much he had heard of the splendid work Colonel Shepard had done and complimenting the board on their acumen in selecting a man of such force and character for the position. He suggested that, as a preliminary to the reappointment of Colonel Shepard, which he assumed was the chief business to be transacted, the board might gracefully adopt a resolution expressing its appreciation of its superintendent's courageous devotion to the duties of his post."

"And they did?" asked the reporter.

"And they did," replied the secretary.

There were traces of tears again on Colonel Shepard's cheeks as the reporter dropped in at the superintendent's cottage to pay his respects to Mrs. Shepard, who had just learned the good news from her husband.

THE SEQUEL TO THE STORY

LIKE other stories, this one has a sequel—a Roosevelt ian sequel.

Ten years later to a day, on February 11, 1909, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, set out from Washington on his last official journey in that capacity, a trip to Hodgensville, Kentucky, to lay the corner-stone of the Lincoln Monument on the farm where Lincoln was born, on the hundredth anniversary of that event.

In the party that accompanied the President was the same reporter who had gone with him on the night ride from Albany to Bath.

All night and all the next day a warm rain fell, swelling the brooks of the Kentucky hills into miniature mountain torrents.

"Do you remember the ride we took together just ten years ago, Mr. President?" asked the reporter.

The President thought for a moment.

"By George! Yes, I do!" he exclaimed. "The night we went down to Bath to save Colonel Shepard! What ever became of him? He was a good man."

"What really happened in that meeting, Mr. President—do you remember?" the reporter asked.

"Nothing," he replied. "There wasn't a man there who didn't have some favor to ask of me as Governor; so nothing *could* happen. But wasn't it cold that night? And wasn't it bully!"

Slaves of Freedom

The Old A. E. F. Spirit Meets a New Test on the Battle-Ground of Peace

By Elmer Brown Mason

Illustrations by Charles Durant

AN Amsterdam Avenue car went dead on the northeast corner of Broadway and Seventy-third Street. The conductor joined the motorman, who was profanely meddling with the inside machinery.

Another street-car came up behind with peremptory jangle of bell, then another. A furniture-van lumbered around the corner of Seventy-third Street, turned into Broadway too sharply, and skidded sidewise, coming to a stop with its hood over the stalled street-car fender. A bright-red truck cut in sharply in front of a taxicab; then, with a grinding of brakes, slid to a standstill behind the motor-van, while two taxicabs, a delivery-wagon drawn by a nervous horse, and a sedan closed in behind the truck.

The motor-van driver, paying no attention to the highly colored, bitter comments of the street-car conductor, got down to crank his engine. The slim, red-headed, snub-nosed boy on the seat of the truck crossed his legs and began to roll a cigarette. Other vehicles added to the jam. Conversation was fluently violent, but there was no action. The red-headed boy finished rolling his cigarette, lighted it, and glanced behind him.

"Hey, you!" he called to the driver of the restless horse. "Back that mule of yourn to the curb so's I can cut over, an' you back, too, 'bout four feet—lots of room," he further directed one of the taxicab chauffeurs.

"I ain't got room to back a foot," the taxicab driver objected. "You just sit still an' smoke your cigaroot, young fella."

"How'm I goin' to get to the curb—on top of that there taxi?" demanded the driver of the restless horse in injured tones.

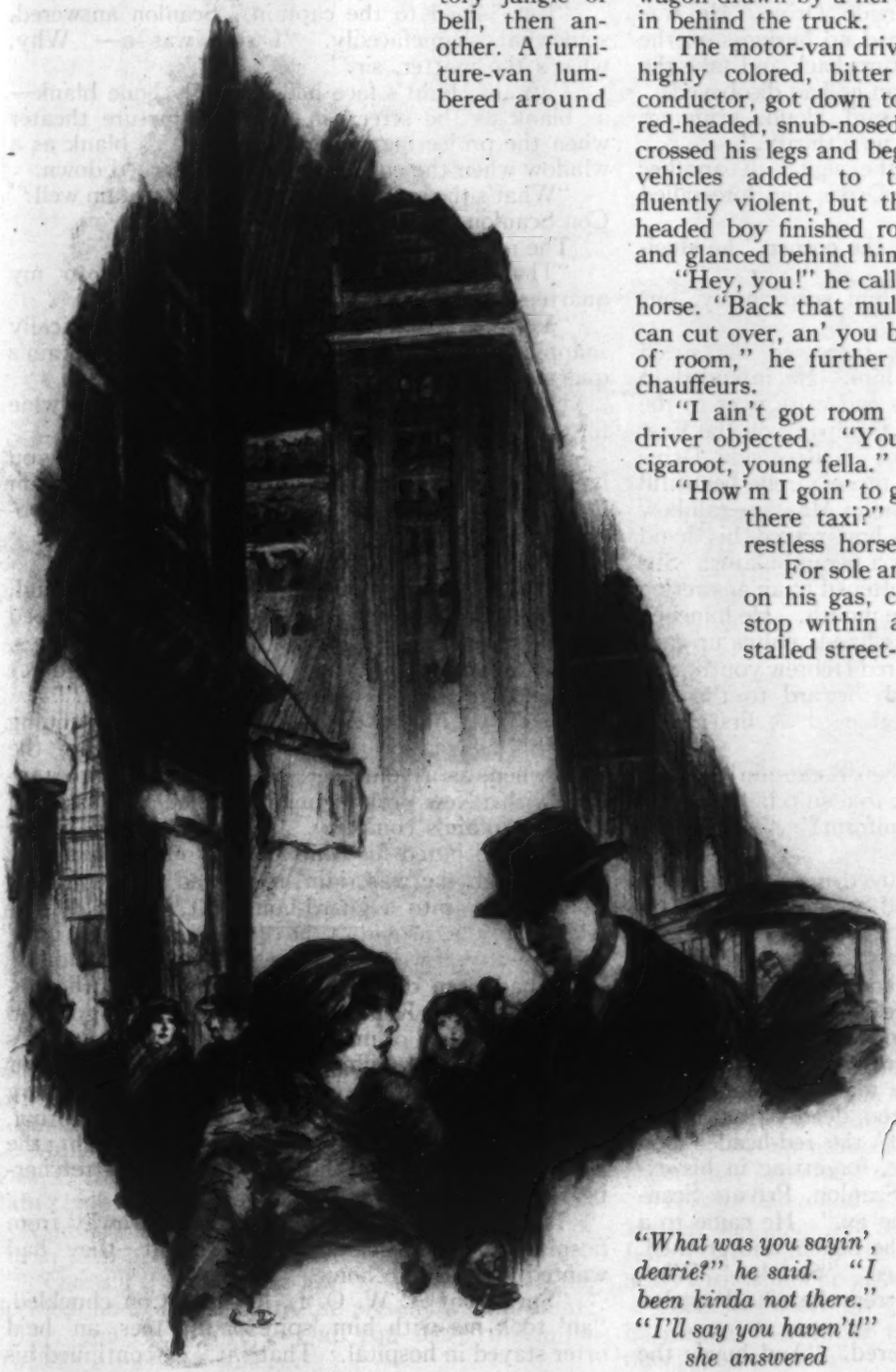
For sole answer, the truck-driver stepped on his gas, cut to the left, and came to a stop within a fraction of an inch of the stalled street-car. The horse reared and sidled against the taxicab. The chauffeur, with an oath, backed, and the man behind him called out furiously:

"Where you think you're goin', you oil-can? Look out for my lights!"

THE red truck backed until it almost brushed the nose of the horse, then cut to the left again, so it was diagonally across Broadway, ready to turn west into Seventy-third Street—were it not for the sedan directly in front of it.

The driver of the horse glared inarticulately, too busy with his animal for speech; the taxicab chauffeur jumped from his seat and came swiftly through to the red truck.

"Come down off there an' I'll knock yer block off!" he yelled.



"What was you sayin', dearie?" he said. "I been kinda not there." "I'll say you haven't!" she answered

The red-headed boy paid no attention to him, but called to the driver of the sedan:

"Cut to the right, buddie, an' let me through. I'm in a hurry."

A policeman appeared and shoved his way into the traffic.

"Hey, you, get back to your bus!" he ordered the taxicab chauffeur. "Straighten out, you on the red truck. What you think you are? A toddle-top?"

There was the roar of a cut-off, and the truck jumped forward three feet. The sedan hastily swung to the right, and, still roaring, the truck slid clear and across Broadway, west down Seventy-third. The policeman made as if to follow, then turned back and plunged into the tangle of vehicles.

CON SCANLON grinned to himself, and brought the truck down to a crawl as it crossed West End Avenue. For a moment he seemed to hesitate, then proceeded toward Riverside Drive. He was perfectly aware that a truck had no business on the Drive, but he did not care to turn back and take the chance of meeting the policeman he had disobeyed.

"Who'd be a cop?" he said aloud, grinning. "Worse'n bein' an M. P.—got no a'th'rity."

He slowed, however, to the signal of another policeman, on the turn to the Drive, and forestalled his question.

"Load furn'ture jus' round the corner," he elucidated.

The policeman looked at him suspiciously, but waved his hand in dismissal.

Con shifted his cigarette, increased his speed slightly, and glanced around him. He intended to turn east again in the Eighties and work over to the garage of the Carry-All Truck Company on the East Side. Meanwhile the prospect of Riverside Drive pleased him. It was one of those rarely beautiful warm days that sometimes come in March,—rainbow promises of spring,—and the boy waved his hand airily at a nursemaid trundling a perambulator. She gazed at him haughtily, then softened to an answering smile for the red head and large mouth. He hunched up his shoulders and raised his hands palms upward in greeting to a fastidiously attired Hebrew youth, who ignored him; then he glanced forward to the sole occupant of a park bench—glanced at first, then stared.

"Holy cognac, if it ain't the ol' captain!" he exclaimed, and brought his truck to a stop by the curb. "An' ain't he the bum outta uniform!"

THE man on the bench moved uneasily, as if he had subconsciously heard Con Scanlon's last words. He was some distance from looking like a bum, but an equal distance from the appearance of prosperity. His clothes were good and well cut, but it was the cut of a by-gone time—as far back as 1917, perhaps. He was a young man, but his pleasant face was thin and drawn, bringing into high relief the livid streak across his right temple made by a machine-gun bullet. He looked tired, too, deadly tired.

"Captain—Captain Hight!" the red-headed boy called as he crossed the Drive, forgetting in his excitement not to limp. "It's Scanlon, Private Scanlon—corporal once, but got the ax." He came to a halt in front of the figure on the bench, and grinned.

"Scanlon?" the man repeated. "Scanlon! Why, of course. How are you, you reprobate? I'm glad to see you!"

"I'm fine," Scanlon answered. "And how's the captain? Has the captain seen anythin' of Sergeant O'Brien since we was discharged?"

"O'Brien?" the man repeated. "Sergeant O'Brien? Yes, he's got a job." He sat up suddenly, a hunted look in his eyes. "Have—have *you* got a job, Scanlon?"

"Sure, I got a job," the boy answered. "Demonstrator for that ol' bus over there—good pay, too. Say, does the captain remember how I got that pair of pants for him at Le Mons when his got tore? Well, I don't mind tellin' the captain now that I borrered 'em offen a medical major that was startin' home."

The light came back in Captain Hight's eyes, and he laughed.

"You certainly kept me busy keeping you out of the guard-house, Scanlon," he said. "I lied for you more than I ever lied before in my life. Even when I made you my orderly you had to go A. W. O. L."

"I'm 'bliged to the captain," Scanlon answered, somewhat shamefacedly. "I sure was a— Why, what's the matter, sir?"

Captain Hight's face had suddenly gone blank—as blank as the screen in a motion-picture theater when the projecting camera snaps off, as blank as a window when the curtain is suddenly jerked down.

"What's the matter, sir? Ain't the captain well?" Con Scanlon persisted.

The man looked up.

"That you, Private Scanlon? Report to my quarters this evening after retreat."

"Yes, sir," Scanlon answered, automatically snapping to attention. "Where are the captain's quarters, sir?"

Expression came back to the blank face as wine fills a glass.

"I'm glad to have seen you, Scanlon—*glad* you have a job. Come round and see me sometime. I'm living at 172a West Seventy-fourth Street—temporarily."

"NOW wouldn't that frost you!" Con said aloud, as he climbed to the seat of his truck, stepped on the gas, and rolled up toward the Eighties. "Now wouldn't that frost you! Ol' captain don't look *right* to me. Wonder what's eatin' him?"

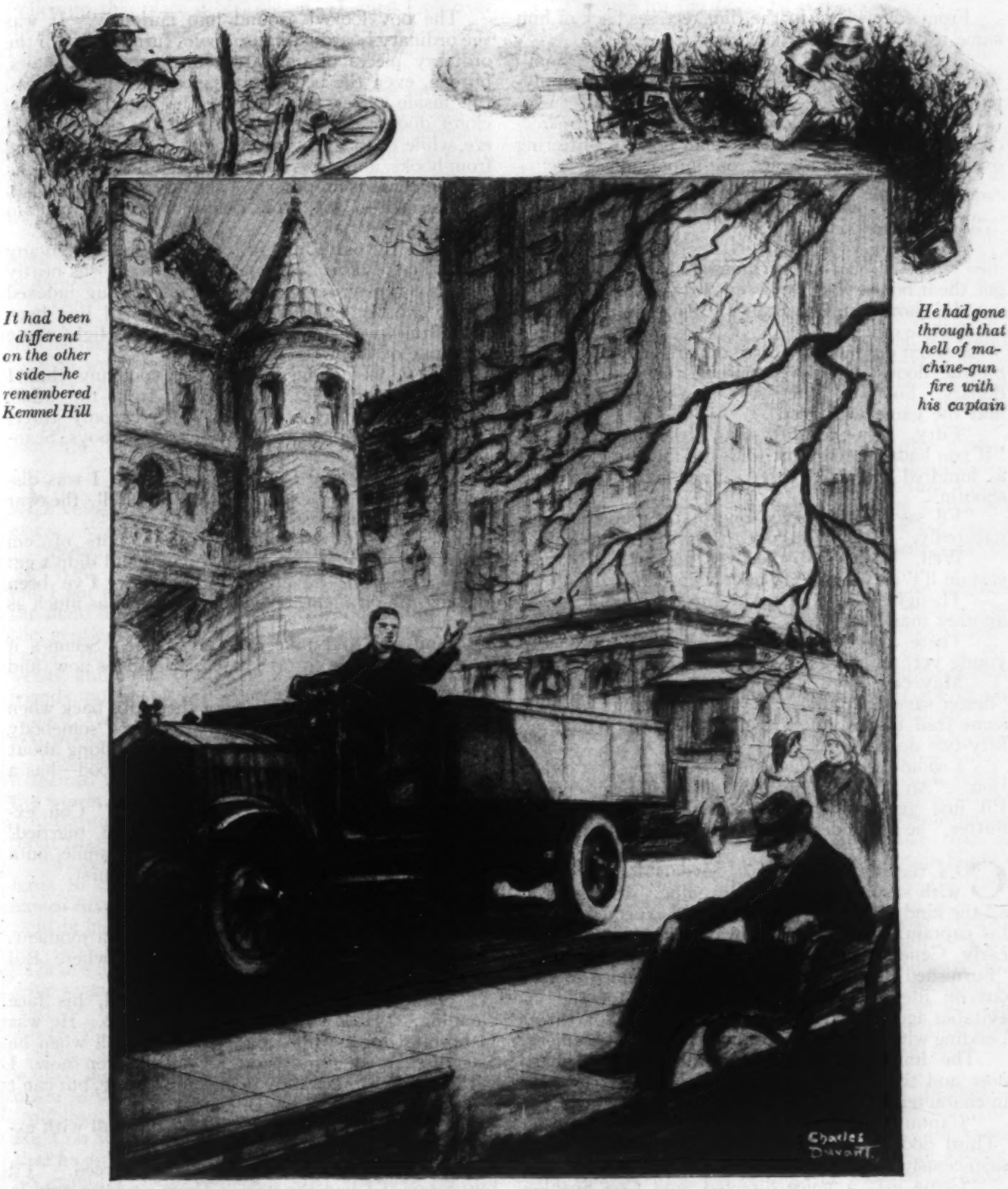
The boy's mind went back into the past, running over his association with Captain Hight from the time when, as a volunteer, he had gone to Spartanburg with a New York regiment and had been assigned to the captain's company. He recalled with a grin how he had hated his commanding officer then.

"Thought he was ridin' me 'stead of keepin' me from turnin' into a guard-house rat," he told himself. "An' he wouldn't have kept me from goin' bad, anyway, if we hadn't went over when we did."

It had been different on the other side, though. He remembered Kemmel Hill—how he had gone up through that hell of machine-gun fire at the captain's elbow. He'd felt different about the captain after that. Well, you tell 'em! Then the Hindenburg Line. Three days and nights of bitter fighting, culminating on September 30. He'd thought the captain had his when the same squad of stretcher-bearers picked them both up.

Then London. The captain had run away from hospital to get back to his regiment—they had wanted to send him home.

"Sure went A. W. O. L. hisself," Con chuckled, "an' took me with him 'spite of my toes, an' he'd orter stayed in hospital. That's it," he continued his



It had been different on the other side—he remembered Kemmel Hill

He had gone through that hell of machine-gun fire with his captain

"If it ain't the ol' captain! An' ain't he the bum outta uniform!"

soliloquy. "The ol' man weren' never right after the armistice. Always worritin' 'bout the boys, an' raisin' hell with the supply company to get us coal at Le Mons after we stole all the frogs' wood. No, he wasn't right then. Worrit, always worrit, an' it didn't help him none when I went A.W.O.L. to Paree."

Con grinned delightedly at the remembrance of Paris; then his face grew grave again.

'Guess I'll look in on him to-morrer night," he decided, and came back to the present with a shout: "Hey, you, keep over! Did you learn drivin' a truck in a business college?"

The Carry-All Truck Company garage loomed before him, and Con deftly swung his own truck inside, where he turned it over to a washer—demonstrators are an aristocracy and are not required to clean their machines.

It was late, and his especial enemy, the timekeeper, had gone, the red-headed boy realized resentfully. He enjoyed the virulently verbal passage of arms with which he generally ended his day's work.

"The big stiff!" he grumbled. "Goes home when he pleases." And he turned regretfully toward the door, then paused.

From somewhere in the dim recesses back of him came a howl, suddenly checked.

"Huh!" ejaculated Con, raising his head. "Som'-thin' doin'." He made his way back to the supply-room in the rear.

From behind the closed door came a sharp *click-click-click*, then the sound of small objects skittering over concrete, while a voice rose imploringly:

"Come-a you eight! Gallop for *me!*"

"Pinched!" announced Scanlon opening the door. "Gimme them bones!"

"You wait your toin, ol'-timer," one of the six men squatted on the floor answered, "an' when you get them bones you throw 'em *out;* no nursin'."

"I'll show you, Boy Scout," Con answered grimly. And he did.

A seven doubled the three dollars he had dropped on the floor. An eleven turned them into twelve dollars. Followed three sevens in rapid succession and the game was over.

"Fifty, fifty-one, fifty-two," the boy counted. "If you hadn't been tight-wads an' faded me, I'd had a hundred an' six cases. Five naturals! *Some* shootin'!"

"I'll say it is!" agreed one of the players good-naturedly. "What you goin' to do with all that kale?"

"Well, I dunno," the boy answered. "Guess certain li'l' lady's goin' to have a good time."

"Thought you was savin' up to buy a taxi?" another man suggested.

"There ain't no hurry," Con said airily; "I'm young yet, an' they'll be cheaper next year."

"May cost more," the first speaker volunteered; "better save your coin. If you're goin' out with the same frail I seen you with last, you won't have no fifty-two dollars long."

"I should worry," Con disposed of the first objection. "An' if I need any more francs for 'musements I'll just get this chicken squad inta 'nother li'l' flutter," he concluded, and swaggered out the door.

CON regarded 172a West Seventy-fourth Street with suspicion, the next evening. It wasn't at all the kind of house in which he had expected to find his captain. An ancient brown-stone edifice of the early General Grant period, with a dusty sign, "Furnished Rooms," in the window, it seemed to look out on life mournfully, in anticipation of the inevitable agony of transformation into an apartment building with a stucco front and an English basement.

The untidy middle-aged woman with a sharp nose and thin lips who answered the boy's ring was in character with the house.

"Captain Hight?" she repeated his question. "Third floor front." And Con could feel her eyes suspiciously on his back as he mounted the stairs.

"Come in!" a voice directed, and Con Scanlon entered the room, closing the door behind him.

"How are you?" the captain greeted him from where he lay on a couch. "I'm glad to see you, Scanlon. Sit down." And, as the boy hesitated, "*Sit* down! The war's over. Tell me whom you've seen since you were discharged, and about your job—is it a permanent one?" he added anxiously.

"Sure, it's permanent: had it before the war, got it now. I know them trucks, sir. The captain needn't worry 'bout me."

"Glad to hear it," the man answered, with a sigh of relief, getting up from the couch. "Just excuse me for a minute while I check up your card. You were one of the boys I couldn't find, you know."

The boy looked around him curiously. It was the ordinary boarding-house room, furnished with the ordinary pieces of unrelated furniture—and chairs, bureau, even the bed were heaped with newspapers, the inside pages that carried the want ads. The closet door was open, revealing empty clothes-hangers, while coats and trousers were carelessly dangling from hooks, and shoes were piled in a heap.

"Sure needs an orderly," the boy said to himself, and turned to the table before which the captain sat.

It was the only thing in the room that showed any semblance of order. There were several pens neatly alined, a typewriter, and two boxes holding indexed cards; another small bunch of cards had just been freed from its elastic band while Captain Hight wrote upon one of them.

"There were four men in the company that I couldn't locate," he said, turning from the table, "and now you have reported, it leaves only three. How did you happen to lose track of the boys, Scanlon?"

"Well, I got my ol' job back soon as I was discharged," the boy explained. "An'—well, the war was over; I kinda lost track of 'em."

"I see," the captain assented. "Lots of 'em weren't as lucky as you were, though, and didn't get a job right off—haven't got one yet. I've been keeping tab on them, trying to help them as much as I could."

"You sure did take care of us, sir. Seems's if we oughta be able to take care of ourselves now, and not bother the captain."

"Some of the boys didn't get their jobs back when they returned," Hight answered evasively; "somebody had to look after them. Well, you were asking about Sergeant O'Brien. He's living in Englewood—has a job in the electric plant, and is married."

"Well, now, whatja know 'bout that!" Con exclaimed delightedly. "Ol' Serg O'Brien married! Why, the mamselles never even gotta smile outa him." He stopped, confused at his outburst.

The captain laughed.

"Couldn't say that about all you boys!"

"No, sir," Con agreed, was silent for a moment, then asked: "Does the captain know where Bill Ryder—Corporal Bill Ryder—is?"

"He's in Syracuse," Hight answered, his face clouding. "Hasn't been able to get a job. He was in hospital for a while, and he wasn't well when he was discharged—isn't good for much even now, I gather. He wants to buy in on a milk route, but can't get the money, and I haven't—"

He broke off, and sat staring at the wall with expressionless eyes.

"Whole lot of us like that," Con agreed. "I'd buy a taxi if I had the kale. There's a lotta coin in bein' a taxi driver if you own your own car, I'll tell the world."

THE captain did not answer; he sat brooding. Con watched him, noting how thin he was, how his hair had begun to turn at the temples. Finally the boy ventured another question:

"Did the—" But he never finished the sentence.

Just as it had done on Riverside Drive, Captain Hight's face went blank.

Con sprang to his feet.

"The captain's sick," he said. "Can I get a doctor? Can't I get *som'thin'* for the captain?"

"No—no, thank you. Oh, that you, Scanlon?

Police up this place a bit, please. I must look over the papers—yes, look over the papers. Must be jobs. I'll run over that file again. Said you had a job, didn't you, Scanlon?"

Con was frightened. Mechanically he set about putting the room to rights, adjusting the clothes on the hangers, alining the shoes, putting soiled garments in the laundry-bag behind the door, shutting down the officer's tin trunk that stood open in a corner of the room. He was frightened, and he didn't know what to do.

The heap of newspapers rustled as he took them from the bed, and the man at the table raised his head in annoyance.

"Don't touch those papers!" he said sharply. "Oh, it's you, Scanlon. That will be all now. Report to me after reveille."

Con went down the stairs, cold chills chasing one another along his spine.

"Sure is off his nut," he mumbled beneath his breath. "Ol' captain's sure in a bad way. I orta do som'thin' 'bout it, but I don't know what!"

"SAY, are you a friend of Captain Hight?" a voice interrogated, and the landlady blocked his exit.

"Sure, I am," Con answered.

"Well, I hate to say anything about my lodgers, but I got to do something about him. He won't let the maid do up his room, and he walks all night, so's the gentleman underneath—he's been with me six years—threatens to leave; and he owes me for two weeks, and I don't think he's right in the head. His friends ought to do something about him." She paused, then resumed bitterly, "And he owes me for two weeks."

Con marveled at the impulse that prompted him—it seemed to have nothing to do with him really, but the words flowed glibly off his tongue:

"Captain Hight asked me to stop an' see you 'bout that—I usta be his orderly. How much is it?"

"I been charging him ten dollars a week, but I'll have to raise him after the first of the month to eleven-fifty. I've worried so much over him not being right in his head, and—"

"Say, what's eatin' you?" Con broke in fiercely. "There's nothin' the matter with the captain. Here's your twenty dollars which he gave me to give you." And he made his way past the woman into the street.

Con Scanlon wrestled with his problem as he walked homeward. Of course it was none of his business if the captain wanted to go crazy over the troubles of his men after they had been discharged. He, Con Scanlon, should worry! But the trouble was that he did worry. He didn't want to, but, somehow, he couldn't help himself. The virulence of the doughboy oath that slipped between his lips attested to his annoyance. Well, if he *had* to mix in with something that didn't really concern him, what was the best thing to do? Get the captain to go to the hospital, of course. He'd speak to him about it the next night. Funny he should be giving advice to the ol' captain, but— Oh, well, the war was over!

Wednesday afternoon Con Scanlon gave a deft demonstration of the Carry-All Truck's virtues for the benefit of a grocery firm on West Thirteenth Street, and reached the home garage, his work for the day finished, at four-thirty. He turned the truck over to the washer and then sauntered into the office to report to his pet enemy, the time-keeper.

"Through for the day," he announced airily.

"Don't be so sure," the older man answered irritatingly. "You don't draw your pay for nothing."

"I guess I earned my pay by sellin' a truck to them grocery people," Con retorted, settling comfortably against the desk for combat. "More'n you've done in a year."

"You got it soft," the time-keeper snarled, "but I guess you don't leave now. There's a party in the Bronx wants to see the truck before six. Here's the address." And he handed over a slip of paper.

"Bronx's outta my territory. You wouldn't have me wear myself all out doin' extra work? That would be 'gainst that there efficiency you're always talkin' 'bout."

"Efficiency!" snorted the old man. "Efficiency! Six loafing city truck demonstrators when we could get along with four, five at the most—save forty dollars a week, two thousand and eighty dollars a year. Two thousand and eighty dollars!" he repeated gloatingly.

"I was thinkin' of askin' for a raise this week," Con poured as oil on the fires of the other's resentment.

"And the country goin' to hell so fast that a man can't live, prices are so high! And the Carry-All Truck Company cutting dividends. You get out of here!" the time-keeper ordered furiously, as he caught the delighted grin on Con's face.

The grin had faded, though, as Con walked slowly toward the eating-house near his room. The contemplated visit to Captain Hight loomed ominously before him, with its purpose of offering unsolicited advice. Though the former doughboy was unconscious of the mental processes that led to the conclusion, he voiced that conclusion accurately in the words he spoke aloud:

"What license I got to be buttin' in there?"

Nevertheless, the same instinct that had driven him fiercely to shield his former commanding officer from criticism, and to pay the landlady twenty dollars out of his own pocket, made him realize that he simply could not have others know of Captain Hight's infirmity—if infirmity it really was, and not the fruits of his own imagination.

"It sure is white of the captain to keep track of the boys an' help 'em," he assured himself. "I bet he's given away a heap of francs that he'll never get back. It's worse'n goin' over the top speakin' to him, though. Gosh, I wonder if he eats at all!" he exclaimed, his thoughts taking a new direction. "Or does he just stick in that ol' hen's top story an' write letters to the boys?"

Con finished his meal, rolled and lighted a cigarette, and sauntered out into the street.

"Well, let's go!" he said aloud, finally, the words that took many a company over the top in France; and, remembering not to limp, he squared his shoulders and set out for Seventy-fourth Street. All the way he kept his mind sternly from wandering and concentrated on what he was going to say.

THE landlady vouchsafed him a thin-lipped smile; then he was knocking at Captain Hight's door, breathless with his purpose rather than from the three flights of stairs.

"Come in! Come in, Scanlon. I was just thinking about you," was Captain Hight's cordial greeting.

"The captain won't be sore at me," Con began,—not at all the words he had planned,—"but the captain oughta go to the hospital. The captain ain't well. He's wore hisself out over the boys—they ain't worth

it. Any fella can get a job if he's right. The war's over—" The former doughboy came to a dead stop.

Captain Hight heard him out without interruption, without smiling.

"I'm much obliged, Scanlon, for worrying over me," he answered gravely. "I *had* rather lost hold of myself, but I'm all right now. I'll explain it to you, if you don't mind listening. To begin with, I've a small income and I didn't actually have to look for a job when we got back. That was bad for me, because it gave me too much time on my hands and kept my thoughts back in the war, when they should have been busy with something else.

"Then, another thing: I expected that after the whole world had got together to fight a tyranny for freedom, the world would be a lot better; that it would lay aside many of the mean, unfair things that had made it an unpleasant place in the past—in short, that it would go forward. Well, I soon realized that it hadn't. It just slipped back where it was. People were just as greedy, just as selfish, as they had ever been. Labor fought capital and demanded more than it had any decent right to—without consideration of anything but its own selfish prosperity. Capital tried to bear down on labor and wring out the last dollar of profit.

Con choked back the words that came to his lips; "I forgot to give you that there ten," he said

"And they could so easily have gotten together—so easily!

"Well, I realized that—and I realized that the war was over. I gave up worrying about things in general then. I had tired myself out. I tried instead to do what I could for my own men. It's been hard. There are about a dozen of them that seem branded by misfortune.

"I've got one man as many as four jobs, and he has lost them all. Another boy got married on his sixty-dollar bonus when he was discharged, and he has a baby now—and no job. A whole lot of the men get just enough money to live on, not enough to save, to have a chance to get ahead, and it makes them lose ambition. And they fought so splendidly!"

HE paused, rose, and walked to the window. Con Scanlon watched him silently. He didn't pretend to understand what it was all about, and it made him feel uncomfortable, even guilty. It had seemed a good enough old world to him. Well, he should worry! The captain was better; any fool could see that.

Hight turned back from the window.

"I'm not going to let myself worry so much now," he continued; "I'm going to rest up a week or two, and then go West and get something to do outdoors." He paused again, then went on in a lighter tone: "So there you are, Scanlon. I'm much obliged for your interest in me, but I sha'n't slip again as I did last night. Something seemed to blot out inside of me, and I had to struggle not to be back in the war again. I—well, I get mixed up. I'm all right now, though, Scanlon, thanks to a good night's sleep. I hadn't been sleeping much. You never heard your old captain talk this much before, did you? Not even when he was giving you the devil—which you always richly deserved!"

He finished with a laugh.

Scanlon grinned.

"I guess I never did get all that was comin' to me," he ventured.

"I'll say you didn't," Hight agreed. "But you sure could fight, Scanlon. How's that foot now? Does it ever bother you?"

"Oh, it don't bother me much." The boy laughed. "I don't even limp when I watch myself.

I kinda don't want 'em to know down to the truck company that I'm lame—which I ain't really. Funny thing, though, sir. Sometimes, when I'm dead tired, seems them two toes what was shot away comes back, and they ache. Can the captain explain that?"

"Well, no, I can't," Hight answered; "I never heard of the ghosts of toes before. It's fine that you don't even limp, though."

"I don't intend to. Might make a difference with my job—though I don't worry much 'bout that; there's plenty of others. Well, I must be goin'," he concluded; then, voicing a last doubt, "Has the captain had his supper yet?"

"Why, no, come to think of it, I haven't. I'm hungry, too. I'll go out with you now. Gosh!" he added in tones of annoyance. "I'll have to walk all the way down to the club to get a check cashed. I forgot to do it yesterday."

"I got some francs, if the captain wants any," Scanlon put in eagerly; "been in a li'l' crap game."

Hight laughed.

"You have, have you? Well, I'll write you a check to bearer for ten dollars—about all I have in the bank, too, till next dividends come in."

The landlady stopped him. "Your friend's been walking all night again," she said. "I've just got to get rid of him"

"That's that!" Con told himself, as he left the captain on Sixth Avenue and turned north while the other man went south. "Captain sure is one he-man an' soft as any frail at the same time. Glad he's all right, though. Well—well, that's that!" he repeated; then stopped dead in his tracks. "I'm an M. P. if I didn't forget to tell him 'bout the twenty-case note I slipped to his landlady!"

NEXT evening the time-keeper received Con with such exaggerated courtesy that the boy was instantly on his guard.

"Has som'body been a-tellin' you som'thin' good 'bout me?" he asked.

"Hardly that," the man answered. "Only I'm just beginning to feel that I never really appreciated you before. Somehow, it seems hard for me to remember that you are a hero. But you did serve in the army, didn't you? In some minor capacity, of course."

"Minor cap'city! Say, I'll tell you som'thin'," Con confided, glancing about him cautiously. "Don't you let it go no further, though." He made a speaking-tube of one hand and whispered through it: "Me an' the M. P's *won* that war!" And he settled more comfortably against the time-keeper's desk, hopeful of hostilities.

"I don't doubt it," the man said politely. "It must be a source of pride to you; indeed, I see that it is—a pride above any reward."

"Sure is," Con responded challengingly, very much up in the air as to where all this was leading.

"Glad to hear it, Mr. — er — Scanlon," came the smooth answer. "You are lucky to have come out of it so well, without a—er—limp, shall we say?

"Oh, I nearly forgot to mention it. The Carry-All Truck Company is having all its employees go through a physical examination—new blanket insurance scheme, I believe. So many of the ex-service men have deteriorated physically, I have heard. So glad you aren't one of them. Here's the doctor's address; get it done this evening. I regret very much that you have to use your own time, but such are the orders from the uptown office."

And he turned back to the papers on his desk with a triumphant grimace. It was just as well that he did not look up at that moment, for the expression on Con Scanlon's face was not a pretty one.

Out in the garage, the boy quickened his step to join the five other demonstrators, who were grouped together.

"Say," he addressed them generally, "what's this here phys'cal 'xamination ol' Walker's so tickled 'bout? I kinda thought he was goin' to kiss me."

"'Tain't *that* that's makin' him so happy," a man answered. "The ol' Carry-All Company's bein' reorganized; I seen it in the papers. If you ask *me*, I'll say som'body's goin' to be fired. Ain't nothin' but savin' money would make that oil-can grin."

"Well, I'll tell the world one thing," Con stated hotly. "I ain't goin' to take no phys'cal 'xamination. This ain't the army. They can have my job first."

"What's eatin' you, ol'-timer?" came the surprised question. "You talk like som'body was interferin' with your rights or—or som'thin'."

"You never mind what I talk like," the boy answered. "I ain't goin' to take no phys'cal 'xamination for *nobody*." And he turned and walked away.

The group stared after him, and the first man spoke again:

"There *is* som'thin' eatin' Con, you take it from me! I got it! He wears a wound button, don't he? Well, he's 'fraid of that there 'xamination," he concluded triumphantly.

"He should worry!" stated another. "If one of us dem'strators gets the ax, it won't be Con Scanlon. Why, he can make a truck *shimmy* for him."

"He's a good guy, too," commented a third member of the group—"a sure-'nough good guy!"

CON did not go for a physical examination that evening to the address that had been given him. Instead, he took the "certain li'l' lady" to a picture show. But his companion found him poor company. Contrary to his custom, Con was thinking. He wished, now, that he had not tried to conceal the loss of his toes—had frankly limped.

"Ol' Walker is onto som'thin' bein' wrong with me," he soliloquized, "though I don't guess he could get me fi-ed—I'm too good. It ain't that that bothers me; it's that he should have *anythin'* on me—the ol' stiff! Guess Bill was right," his thoughts went on; "som'body is due to be lookin' for 'nother job in our squad."

Mentally he passed his companions in review. There was no question as to which one would be dropped: Anderson, another ex-service man.

"He ain't patient 'nough with a truck, an' he ain't got much nerve. Guess bein' gassed didn't do him no good," he continued to himself. "But losin' my toes didn't do *me* no good, neither. 'Course that kinda guy had to get married," he concluded disgustedly, and turned to his companion. "What was you sayin', dearie? I been kinda not there—thinkin', I guess."

"I'll say you haven't!" she answered indignantly.

When Con came in from his day's work the next evening, he found the demonstrators again gathered into a gossiping group.

"I had the right dope," Bill greeted him. "One of us gets the ax next week. Only goin' to be five dem'strators."

"I know who that guy will be," Anderson broke in, his voice carefully controlled. "I knew that gas was unlucky."

He spoke airily, but there was an undercurrent of bitterness in his voice.

Every one of the five men caught it, and, after the manner of their kind, ignored it.

"Well, it may be me," Con said; "I'm shy a coupla toes"—and was sorry, the next moment, that he had spoken.

"Oh, you!" Anderson commented—and this time there was no attempt to hide the bitterness.

Con Scanlon went through the physical examination that evening. He had come to the conclusion that if the loss of his toes were going to make any difference in his career as a truck demonstrator, he wanted to know it at once.

"Not that I care one way or other for the ol' job," he told himself, "but I don't want that ol' stiff, Walker, to think I'm 'shamed of bein' wounded."

The ordeal did not prove so bad as he had expected. The doctor was also an ex-service man, so Con was at home with him at once. He brought away a filled-out physical examination sheet that bore, as sole comment on his wound: "Two toes missing—no disability."

The boy speculated idly as to why his chest expansion had so materially decreased from the inches he had been proud of when he had first entered the service, then carelessly solved the problem with the thought that perhaps he was getting old.

It was not till two days later, when Scanlon went to the time-keeper to check out in the evening, that the old man mentioned the physical examination.

"I see that I have never really done you justice, Mr. Scanlon," he remarked acidly. "Not only are you a hero, but a wounded hero at that. Doesn't the lack of toes sometimes cause you inconvenience in driving a truck?"

"It might bother me if I was givin' dancin' lessons," the boy retorted, "but I wouldn't notice it in no other pr'fession."

"Odd place to be wounded," the time-keeper continued, watching the boy as a cat watches a mouse. "Would you mind telling me how it happened?"

"Sure, I wouldn't," Con agreed promptly. "You see, Mr. Walker, we was always wearin' out our feet chasin' the Heinies; so, one evenin', I stood on my head for to give 'em a rest. You get me? This eff'ciency stuff! Well, a whizz-bang come 'long an' nipped one of 'em." He grinned happily at his interlocutor.

"You don't say!" the old man stuttered furiously. "You don't say! Well, it may restore your balance to hear that it rests between you and Mr. Anderson which shall be dropped from the Carry-All Truck Company's pay-roll. You're a better driver than he is, I understand, but I doubt if the company is justified in trusting a valuable truck to a cripple."

"Cripple! Where do you get that stuff?" Con retorted hotly. "As for my job, you can have it any time you want it. *I* should worry." And he flung out of the office.

IT was the Saturday night crap game that changed the current of events. It differed from the previous one materially. In twenty minutes Con got up from the concrete floor shorn of his weekly forty dollars and all else in his pocket save a single ten-dollar bill and some change.

"I'm through!" he announced. "Never did like gamblin'. It ain't right—when you lose." And he swaggered out of the door of the rear room, followed by a mocking shout of laughter from within.

"Guess I'll have to slip round to the captain an' collect that there twenty dollars I gave his landlady," Con mused, as he stood rolling his inevitable cigarette before stepping into the rain. He buttoned his coat.

"Mr. Scanlon! Oh, Mr. Scanlon!" a voice called from the office that opened into the garage. "Will you kindly step in here a moment?"

Con entered, and found himself facing the time-keeper, who was looking at him enigmatically as he raised his eyes from a slip of paper.

"I just wanted to ask if you had come to any decision in regard to leaving us? You intimated, the other day, that such might be your intention."

"I ain't thought of it one way or the other," Con answered guardedly, and awaited developments.

"I'm glad of that," the time-keeper continued, his eyes alight with cool triumph. "It would have been a little like resigning under fire—though you *might* have excused it to yourself as giving Mr. Anderson a chance. You see, that ten-dollar check I cashed for you, signed Ralph Hight, came back N. G.—insufficient funds. No hurry about it, of course, as long as you're working *here*"—he stressed the last word; "I can take it out of next week's pay check. That is, if you are retained instead of Mr. Anderson in spite of your efficiently acquired wound." And he smiled—the smile of the small mind that seems to delight in inflicting pain.

YOUNG Scanlon looked at him uncomprehendingly. Then he felt, rather than saw, a red mist gathering before his eyes, realized that his body was tensed for a spring. Abruptly he controlled himself and went swiftly out into the garage, bumping into Bill as he walked blindly.

"Where you think you're goin'!" Bill demanded wrathfully. "Think I'm part of the pav'ment? Why—why, what's eatin' you, Con?"

"Slip me a ten-spot," the boy demanded; "I'll 'xplain later."

"Take what you want," Bill answered, handing over a roll of bank-notes; "li'l' gallopers run my way."

Con shook his head to clear it, peeled off a ten-dollar note, and handed the rest back to his friend. His one idea was to take up the check, then empty the sulphurous words that were in his mind on the time-keeper's head.

Trying out his vocabulary below his breath, he walked back into the office; but its former occupant was gone.

"Monday'll have to do," Con assured himself, "an' I guess it's just as well he had went—I might have murdered him. Well, now for the captain! An' where'm I goin' to get the nerve to tell him 'bout that check, not to mention the twenty-case note, after all he done for the boys?"

The thin-lipped landlady answered Con's ring, and stopped him as he was about to mount the stairs.

"Your friend's been sick—had a doctor in," she complained; "and I've got to give him notice. He's been walking all night again, and he's only been out once since you were here last. And he ain't right in his head. Why, he asked me if I had a son in the war, and if he had a job, and he knows my name is *Miss* Lyons—though I don't think he meant to insult me. I've just got to get rid of him. I can't have sick people in my house, especially when they ain't right in the head. And he hasn't paid for his room this week, neither, and it was due on Thursday."

Con looked at her, then choked back the words that came naturally to his lips.

"I forgot to give you that there ten," he said, instead. "The captain handed it to me when I was here last." And, passing out the bill, he continued upstairs.

Captain Hight was lying on the couch, covered with a blanket, when Con entered the room.

He rose on his elbow to greet the boy, a spot of fever glowing red in the whiteness of each cheek.

"Caught a bit of a cold and resting up," he said. "Glad you came in; it's been a bit lonely."

"When's the captain goin' West?" Con asked. "Is he goin' where his family is?"

"I'll see my sister in Chicago," Hight answered. "Heavens, Scanlon, don't look so gloomy! I'm not a casualty, not even a blighty wound. I'm going to stick around till this cold is better, then I'm going to forget all about—everything, and get well outdoors."

"The captain oughta quit worritin' 'bout the boys an' go 'way now," Con answered obstinately. "The war's over, sir."

"Yes, the war's over," Hight agreed. "The war's over," he repeated. "Yes—war—war—" Then his face went dead white and blank, and his eyes became unseeing.

"Lemme get you the doctor, sir," the boy cried out. "What's the doctor's name, captain?"

The sick man looked up slowly, then around the room.

"Get this place policed up, Scanlon," he said peevishly. "It looks like a German dugout. And get these prescriptions filled, please," pointing to some papers on the table.

"Yes, sir," the boy answered. "Won't the captain see the doctor?"

"He'll be here at eight," Hight answered wearily. "Get those prescriptions filled before he comes, and bring me something to eat."

When Con got back to 172a West Seventy-fourth Street, the doctor was going up the stairs.

"Say, is Captain Hight pretty sick?" he demanded breathlessly. "Hadn't he oughta go to the hospital?"

"Who are you?" the doctor asked, looking curiously at the excited boy.

"I'm his orderly—was his orderly," Con answered simply. "What's the matter with him?" After a short pause he added "sir" to the sentence.

"There isn't anything really serious at present," the doctor answered soothingly. "You needn't worry, my boy. What's troubling your captain is psychasthenia."

"Sounds bad to me," the boy said, though really he was immensely relieved.

"It isn't as bad as it sounds. It simply means that he's worn out and has a tendency to be too introspective and exaggerate all forms of worry. He's got to be kept quiet, that's all."

THE first thing that Con Scanlon did, Monday morning, was to present himself before the time-keeper, his last ten-dollar bill in his hand.

"What's that?" asked old Walker.

"Wanta take up that check," Con answered.

"Oh, all right; I'll send for it; it's at the main office." The man's tone was grudging.

"You'll gimme that check when I get in to-night," Con stated. His voice was perfectly even, but its calmness carried untold menace.

The time-keeper looked up.

"Why, sure, if it comes back from the main office," he answered conciliatingly. "I can let you know then, too, whether it is you or Mr. Anderson who is to be retained," he added as last word.

Con had to take a truck to Yonkers that afternoon, and he didn't get back until after eight o'clock. Then he hurried down to Seventy-fourth Street. There was no answer to his knock, and he opened the door, his heart in his mouth. The captain was sleeping peacefully, a heap of newly written letters on his desk and the room strewn with newspapers. The boy studied the sleeping man's face in the mirror across the room,—he had heard some place that if you looked steadily at any one sleeping it woke the person up,—and marveled at the change in it.

"Looks kinda like a girl," he told himself with awe; "all thin an' kinda delicate. His hair's gettin' white, too. Guess the ol' captain had it hard—harder than us boys knew."

He went quietly around putting the room to rights until a step outside the door made him pause, then cross swiftly and open it. The doctor had his hand raised to knock.

"He's asleep," Con whispered.

The doctor glanced sharply at the unconscious man, then drew up a chair and felt for the pulse. He wrote rapidly on a prescription blank and, beckoning to the boy, led him out into the hall, closing the door gently behind him.

"I don't like it," he said. "The man seems to have burnt himself out—a lot of those who came back from the other side are that way. He doesn't seem to have any stamina. I—well, I don't know. I think you had better send for his people, if you know who they are."

"He's got a sister in Chicago," Con answered; "I know her 'dress—it's on one of the letters there."

"Well, you'd better telegraph her to come on at once. Don't wake him, but skip out now and send your telegram; then get this prescription filled, and give it to him when he wakes of his own accord. I'll be in to-morrow morning early—about seven-thirty. I look for a change then."

AT ten-thirty Con had an answer to his telegram, saying that Miss Hight was on her way to New York. At eleven the captain opened his eyes and gazed around him languidly.

"Hello, Scanlon," he said, finally. "What you doin' here so late? Haven't lost your job, have you?" he added, rising on his elbow, the fever spots coming back to his cheeks.

"No, sir; my job's all right," the boy answered hastily. "The doctor said not to wake the captain, but to give him this when he did wake"; and he tendered a glass. "Won't the captain go to bed now?"

Hight drank off the potion obediently, and permitted himself to be helped to the bed.

"It certainly feels natural to have you around, Scanlon." He sighed comfortably as the boy drew the blankets over him. "Are you going home now?"

"I thought I'd curl up on the lounge, so's to get more sleep. It's a long way home, an' it's late." Con was apologetic.

"Sure, I'd like that first rate," the captain agreed. "It will be like old times, and you can get me breakfast in the morning." He turned over and was instantly asleep.

The boy stretched himself on the couch. He wanted to think the situation out. But, somehow, he couldn't concentrate. Disjointed fragments came into his mind: his return from being A. W. O. L. at Paris; the time-keeper's expression when he had spoken of the dishonored check.

The arrival of the doctor woke him in the morning. Captain Hight was still sleeping, and they did not disturb him.

Con exhibited the telegram, heard the doctor's instructions, arranged with a reluctant landlady to bring up some breakfast, and scribbled a note saying he would soon return, which he stuck in the mirror with the telegram.

"SAY," Con began without preamble in the time-keeper's office, "do I keep this job or not?"

The time-keeper looked up. He saw the strain in the boy's eyes, seized his opportunity.

"You seem more interested than you were a day or two ago," he suggested coolly.

"I am," Con stated shortly.

"I can not give you a definite answer at present," the old man said; then took a chance and added: "I might possibly suggest that you be the one to be retained."

"I wish you would," Con said in a whisper. "I gotta take to-day off—see you in the morning." And, crimson-faced, he left the room, the time-keeper staring after him, too surprised for speech.

CAPTAIN HIGHT did not wake at one o'clock, when the doctor came, and he continued to sleep through the afternoon.

Con lay on the couch and alternately dozed and enought.

What was he doing here, anyway? he asked himself. Well, it wasn't for long. The captain's sister ought to arrive by evening. Why had he taken water before the time-keeper? Ashamed he mentally dodged the question, then finally told himself the reason. He was deadly afraid of losing his job, and he couldn't afford to lose it if it should transpire that the captain's sister had no money. Of course she probably, she undoubtedly, had. But she might not have. He couldn't take a chance.

The boy found himself suddenly wondering whether Anderson had some reason because of which he *must* keep his job. Oh, well, there were plenty of other jobs in the world, especially for skilled mechanics, good truck demonstrators. Would he, Con Scanlon, have taken what he had from the time-keeper if there had been no one else concerned in the matter? Not in a thousand years!

At five o'clock Captain Hight woke, drank some beef tea, and demanded the papers. The boy gave him the morning papers, and went out to get the evening editions. It took him half an hour to walk over to Sixth Avenue and return to Seventy-fourth Street. He climbed the stairs and entered the room without knocking. Then he paused in amazement at the sight within.

The tin trunk in the corner of the room was open, its contents spilled on the floor. Captain Hight, dressed in his old uniform, half lay, half sat on the couch.

"What the—" Con began in a scared voice.

"Where have you been, Scanlon? No matter. Get me a taxi at once. I've got to see—see the commanding officer." He waved a letter.

"Can't—hadn't the captain better wait until the doctor comes?" Con stuttered.

"Doctor? What doctor? Look here: this letter is from Sergeant O'Brien. He's lost his job. I must see—see—the commanding officer, of course. My men—" He slipped back on the couch, breathing heavily.

Con flew to him and undid the collar of his blouse.

The man's face was gray. The boy had seen too many faces wearing that color not to know what it meant.

"War's over—my men—" came a faint whisper. Then silence.

CON SCANLON turned wearily into the garage of the Carry-All Truck Company the next morning, and made his way toward the time-keeper's office. He had left Seventy-fourth Street at midnight, after doing all that he could for Miss Hight. She was now on her way back to Chicago with the body of his captain. Somehow, he couldn't feel any definite grief; indeed, there was rather a feeling of relief. It was all over and done with now, and he was just a truck demonstrator with a good job and no responsibilities.

He felt that it was all wrong, somehow, though. It was—it was unnecessary: the captain worrying over his men. They ought to take care of themselves. Wasn't the war over?

"Ah, Scanlon," the time-keeper greeted him, and made a check before his name on a list. "I succeeded in having you retained; Anderson goes. You might tell him to step in here. He's in the garage."

Con said no word, but stared dully at the man.

"Oh, you needn't trouble to thank me," the old man remarked sarcastically. "I did it only in the interests of efficiency. You are the better truck demonstrator."

Still Con did not speak. His mind felt disjointed; he couldn't think. And suddenly the ghosts of his toes returned and began to ache agonizingly.

He made an effort to collect himself. What was it that he was to do? Oh, go and tell Anderson to come into the office to be fired. But perhaps Anderson didn't want to be fired? Perhaps he needed the money—*had* to have the money, as he, Con Scanlon, might have had to have the money if the captain's sister had been penniless.

He didn't have to have it now, though. The captain was dead—gone where he wouldn't have to worry over his men any longer. Con choked back a dry sob.

"I guess I don't want my job no more," he said tonelessly. "I ain't comin' back." And he turned away.

"But—but look here, Scanlon," the time-keeper began.

He looked up, to see Scanlon limping out the door.

Rain at Dawn

By Faith Baldwin

GRAY with grief, the hooded morn
Walks abroad on quiet feet,
Birds, exquisite and forlorn,
Singing in the rain, entreat. . . .

So the heart, that through the night
Watched for dawn, and woke to tears,
Lifts its voice to reach the light
It recalls of other years.

The Dark Noon

By Edith D. Osborne

LIFE, like a clock, has stopped at noon.
But I'm too stunned by silence yet
To count the hours 'twixt sun and moon,
Or pray at all. . . . Time I forget. . . .

With spring's young things and fire divine
The world goes on its ordered way!
The only useless heart is mine,
That saw Love die but yesterday.

I wish that I had bread to bake,
White floors to scrub, and ale to brew:
The busy heart forgets to break. . . .
But mine has nothing left to do.

Dare a Girl Risk a Man's Love to Save His Life?
This Is the Problem Jenni Faces in—

The Door On the Past

By M. L. C. Pickthall

Illustrations by D. C. Hutchison

WHEN Wharton brought Jenni home to the cabin by the Chickamin, he carried her up from the boat in his arms, and so across the threshold. He set her down within, and said such things as a man may to the woman who, in a few short weeks, has come to be the dearest one on earth. She, as was her way, listened in silence, one small too-white hand lightly stroking his face. Her inscrutable, plaintive eyes measured her new world. At last she said:

"You didn't tell me it was such a real nice place. It has two rooms."

"There ain't another cabin on the Chickamin with two rooms, pretty."

She murmured: "And two tables, and two big chairs, and two windows. And two doors. Why has it two doors, Lew?"

"We'll only use one—this one. The other just stops shut."

She persisted slowly: "But why's it there?"

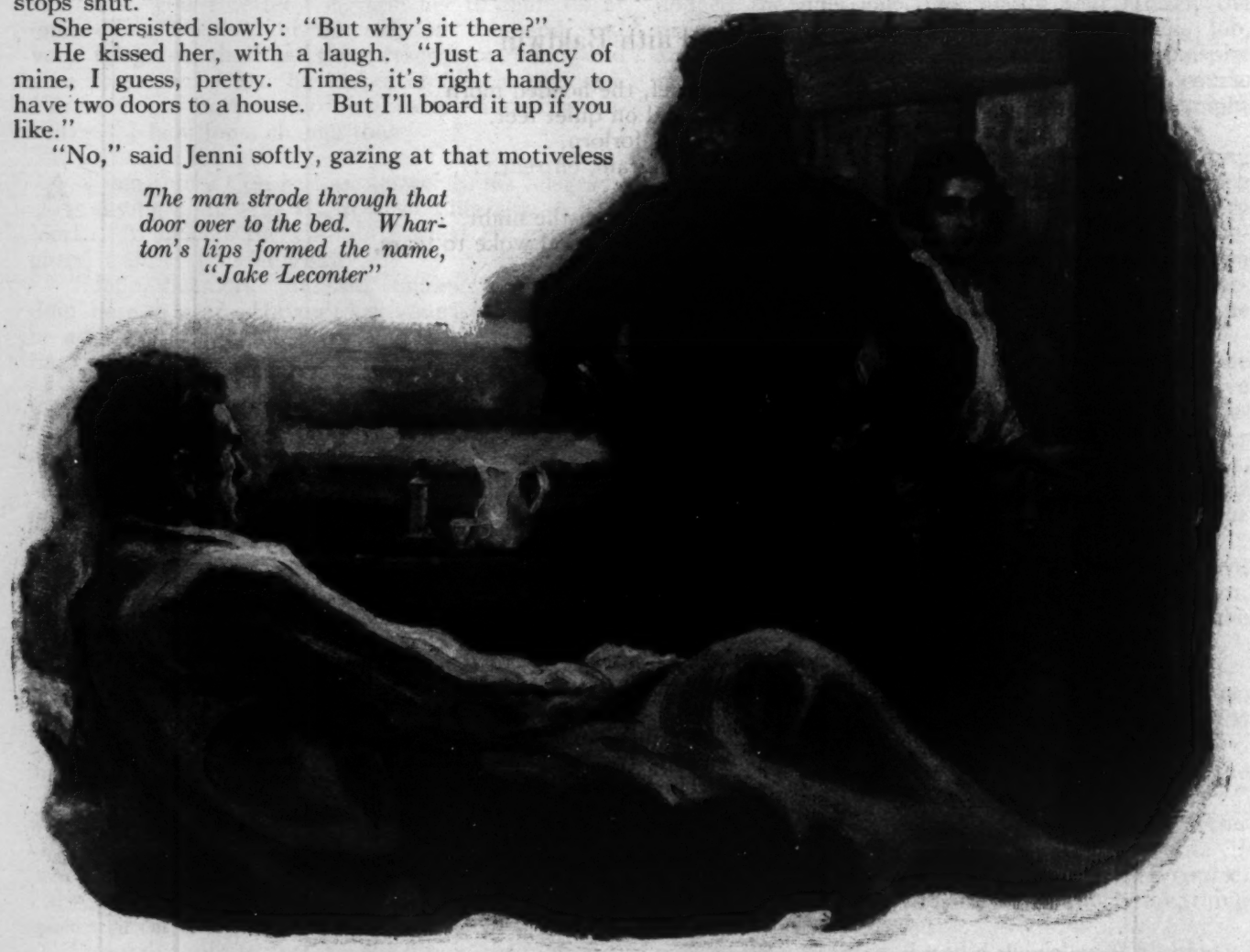
He kissed her, with a laugh. "Just a fancy of mine, I guess, pretty. Times, it's right handy to have two doors to a house. But I'll board it up if you like."

"No," said Jenni softly, gazing at that motiveless shut door which had held her attention from the first, "for that wouldn't keep it out."

Wharton was lighting the stove and did not hear.

ALL that summer one door stood open on the forest and the sky and the sapphire peaks of the Coast Range; and from that door Jenni seemed to look out on her future with Wharton. And one door, always shut, looked blindly back along the overgrown trail which was all that country had of roads; and by this door Jenni knew that one day the past would come walking in on her.

In spite of her happiness, she was very much alone, and loneliness grows fancies as a slash does bracken. She did not know the strength of her own illusion about this shut door until one night of great heat, when they were scorched with the breath of forest fires behind the hills. Wharton was about to open it



The man strode through that door over to the bed. Wharton's lips formed the name, "Jake Leconter"

so that a draft might cool the cabin. But he was stopped. Jenni set her back to the door and two appealing hands on his breast. She was wild and tremulous, changed in a moment from the sleek, busy creature he knew; he could only stare at her as she said from stammering lips:

"No! No! Keep it shut. Not *yet*."

"Why, pretty!"

"Keep it shut! Don't open it yet."

"Say, pretty, what's got you, girl?"

Her hands fluttered on his breast to the tune of fear, so that his heart answered with a thud. She whispered: "You don't know what might come in on us."

"Why—girl of mine—there ain't one thing to hurt you!"

Perhaps she knew better. "Give me—a little longer," she moaned—and was down in a heap across his boots. He had never seen her faint or sick, and in his scare he forgot alike the door and what she had said.

But Jenni never forgot. All the time she wondered how long that door would stay shut.

She would touch her lips to Wharton's hand while he slept, murmuring, "Give me a little longer." She would gaze at the forest, through which that one dark trail ran like a dark memory. No one traveled it.

The year went on. Except for that shut door, Jenni might have been born unremembering into a new world.

She had a child's pleasure in her new world—queenly, tremulous, a little lonely. It was all hers: the squirrels on the roof, the humming-birds at the wild honeysuckles, the dawn on the Range, the night on the clearing—these, and for good measure sleep, cedar smells, and a man's happy voice singing at his work.

That voice filled Jenni with a scared, exquisite delight. She could hardly believe herself the cause of that strong, good happiness.

Her one prayer was:

"A little longer. Leave me be a little longer!"

She was all about the woods, wading, fishing, climbing trees. Once she climbed a tree so tall that panic nailed her to the boughs, and Wharton had to fetch her down. He scolded, and she cried a little. He said she was reckless.

"What you *want* to climb such a big one for, honey?"

"I—wanted to see back along the trail."

"Well, there's nothin' to see on the old trail. Don't you run them risks."

She looked at him queerly. "Is it a bigger risk than a feller took when he married the new girl out of the store at Rexon River without knowin' one thing about her?"

He swept her suddenly into his arms. "I knew *you*."

She said no more.

THE summer passed. Autumn made little change in the eternal evergreen forest; only the dogwoods flamed, the coast-maple yellowed, and the madroño was heavy with scarlet berries. With the winter rains Wharton took sick.

It was rheumatism and mountain fever. After a few days it left him, clear-headed, happy as a child to be free from pain, but wonderfully weak. He was like a big baby. Jenni nursed him in a passion of tenderness, curiously clumsy. Wharton, his deep voice rocking with weakness and laughter, taught her how.

"Why, pretty," he said, "what you done all your life not to know the way to make venison tea for a sick man?"

She said, half fiercely: "I can learn now. *Learn* me."

The rainy days were long, for all their love. Sometimes at night the clouds parted like wool around the Range, and she saw the mountains again—changed from the summer, more tremendous and lonely now they were white. She saw stars, and heard the running of many streams. Then again the clouds would shut down, and she would see nothing but gray sheets of rain, hear nothing but rain on the forest, on the roof, on the door that was never opened.

That door fronted east. The rains pattered on it like the patient fingers of one groping for a way in.

She was sure her time was drawing to an end; that back there in the streaming forest, on some sodden forsaken trail, the past was treading nearer, nearer. She almost heard its step.

Yet, when that past came to them, it was Wharton's and not hers.

IT was early night when it came. She had been tending Wharton all day, and fell asleep when the lamp was lighted, her head on the table in the front room, a gray sock, half mended, under her cheek. If life had left any shadow on that face, sleep swept it clear. It was a child's.

Wharton, from his bed in the back room, could see it; and tears of utter, utmost tenderness were in his eyes.

"Little—girl," he whispered. "Little girl—"

Her lips moved. He could not hear. She was murmuring: "Just a little while—a little—longer!"

She slept for an hour. Wharton made no sound. Yet she rose suddenly, as if some one had called her. She stood an instant, then went into the back room, over to Wharton, and stood beside the bed. Her back was to him and her face to the unused door cut in the wall of that room.

Wharton asked sharply: "What's the matter, honey?"

"There's some one comin'."

He listened. There was nothing but the rain. He said: "You been dreaming."

"No. There's some one on the trail. Comin'—comin' to *that* door."

She pointed. Her arm moved as if it were stone. Her manner held Wharton motionless. Both listened, he staring at her back, she at the shut door.

It must have been five minutes before Wharton heard a sound, a step on the trail.

He glanced at her, then at the door. Once more she raised her arm in that heavy way and pointed. As she did this there was a knock at that door.

The sound broke a spell of suspense of which she had made Wharton conscious. He said in a low, reassuring voice:

"Why, it's only some chap wantin' shelter. A prospector, likely. Open the door, pretty."

"*That* door?" She spoke as if her tongue too were turning to stone.

"Why, sure! It'll be easier than callin' him round to the other one. Let him in."

Jenni stood motionless a minute. Then she said in a toneless voice: "I suppose—I—got—to."

She moved to the door and dropped the bar that

Once she climbed a tree so tall that panic nailed her to the boughs; "I wanted to see back along the trail," she said

lay across it. For a moment Wharton looked into a pit of night glittering with rain. The scent of the wet forest was a chill incense on his lips. He drew a deep breath of it, calling heartily:

"Come in, whoever you are, and welcome!"

A man stepped past Jenni into the room. He was a stranger to her—she had never seen him before.

Moving heavily, all of a piece, as if neck, fingers, and limbs were of stone, Jenni shut the door behind him.

Since the lamp was in the other room, and the light entered through the opening in the rough partition, Wharton, lying in the bed against the end wall, was in light, while the stranger, entering by the door in the side wall, was in deep shadow. Wharton, straining his eyes, could see no more than that he was a white man; he said:

"Come right in and get dried. My wife'll fix you. Guess you've been over Molo way? I hear there's likely to be a rush for the mines there in the spring." And so forth. He talked to put the newcomer at his ease; but presently the friendly sentences stopped short.

Wharton had the eerie, incredulous impression that the other, standing there in the shadow, was laughing at him.

He stared. In a moment there was no doubt of it. The man was rocking on his feet with silent, overwhelming laughter.

THERE was something altogether indescribable, something appalling, in that violent, noiseless laughter. Wharton's scalp prickled, his big unsteady fists gripped the bed-clothes; he drew himself to a sitting position, staring into the shadow. He stammered, "What—who—?"

The other man strode over to the bed, still laughing. His face, an unforgettable one, came into the light.

Wharton leaned back on the pillows. His heart shook him, but his eyes were steady, and on his forehead was the bright flush that danger sometimes calls into a fair man's face. His lips just formed the name, "Jake Leconter."

"Sure," agreed the man who laughed. He swept off his cap, and the rain spattered from it on the floor, sounding as loud as shot. "Sure. That's me! Jake Leconter, that you told tales on to the Bushy Lake patrol when he was sick and couldn't shut your mouth—Jake Leconter, that's had you in mind ever since—Jake Leconter, that's bein' trailed by the police now for shootin' a man at Mixed River—Jake Leconter, that might as well be took for two as for one, eh?—Jake Leconter, with his stren'th in him this time, and you with yours out. Yes, that's me, Lew! And ain't it a funny meetin'?"

Wharton said quietly: "It wasn't me told on you, Jake."

"Then that's too bad," answered Leconter softly, "for you won't hardly have time, after all these years, to convince me of it, Lew."

They looked at each other. And presently Wharton knew that he was looking at death. It was there in Leconter's eyes, mad, flaming, laughing, mocking. They were the eyes of a drunkard. Giving and running from death had made Leconter drunk. Once before Wharton had seen a man drunk on that particular tipple. He gave a weak sigh. Not looking at his wife, he said steadily:

"Go on into the other room, Jenni."

She had left the door, crept to the head of the bed, and now crouched there, gazing immovably at Leconter. Her face was blank and stunned. She

could not understand. She felt the shattering of her world about her. But not this way was the past to have come—for she did not know this man.

"Go into the other room, pretty," came Wharton's voice.

She stirred, creeping from the head of the bed until she was between them, could intercept the look the two men had for each other. Then she shrank toward Wharton. For in her husband's eyes she saw murder, reflected from Leconter's as in a mirror.

Leconter did not seem aware of her at all—only of Wharton. The rain still dripped darkly from his clothing to the floor.

"Go 'n' see if the stove's all right, Jenni."

Wharton's hand was on her back, thrusting her toward the other room. It was steady, but so cold that it struck an icy chill to her flesh, even through her clothes. It struck her to life. She turned, stared into his face. For a moment their eyes held, while a sense of terror, an unconcealable human horror, flashed between them. Then Wharton's eyes glanced at the rifle in the far corner. It was as if he had spoken: "Time to get that! If I had half a minute to get at the gun—"

Jenni heard, though the words were unsaid. She glanced at Leconter's mad-drunk, full-lipped face. Something—a fire, a light, a perfectly selfless passion—rose in her; and with it remembrance, and a dark wisdom.

"I," said Jenni to herself, "*I* can maybe gain Lew time to get at his gun."

SHE moved past Leconter. She heard herself say, as if she understood nothing, and with a little laugh:

"Say, you give me a scare, comin' in that way. You're wet, Mr. Leconter. I'll go and put some wood on the stove right away, so you can get dried."

She smiled back over her shoulder at the man. It was a curious, slow smile. For the first time, his eyes followed her.

Wharton, too, looked at her; he had never heard that laugh or seen that smile on his girl's lips.

She went into the other room. They heard her moving around behind the partition, rattling the stove. She was singing lightly to herself; Wharton had never heard her sing that song.

For some reason, both men were less absorbed in each other. Her presence had suddenly become insistent. They listened to her. They did not move.

Presently she came to the opening in the partition, carrying the lamp. Deliberately she held it high. Its light fell on her. She stood smiling—waiting for Leconter.

Leconter looked, grinning. Wharton drew a sharp breath.

Impossible to say how she had wrought the change in herself. The loosened hair with a ribbon hastily twisted, the gleam of white neck, the gleam of beckoning eyes, the smile—it was not in any of these. It was rather as if she had slipped into a dress in which Wharton had never seen her, in which she was strange to him, yet terribly accustomed.

One moment her eyes went to him, then back to Leconter. She laughed mysteriously, moving her round body.

The lamplight, like a hand, slid from shoulder to hip. Not a fold, a fiber, an ornament of that intangible garment of shame but she knew how to use and manage. Fire and wild honey were in her homely words:

"Come in here and get dry, Mr. Leconter. I'm real glad you happened to come in."

Wharton lay still, staring, listening to other words than those she now spoke: "A bigger risk than a feller took when he married the new girl out of the store at Rexon River without knowin' one thing about her?"

Leconter grinned, sneered, and went into the other room.

HE was darkly amused. He thought she played her farce well, this girl, at a moment's notice. She had the courage and the quick wit in spite of which women were fools. For she played her little old stale farce of allurement in the face of his own open disbelief—as if she did not know, had not noticed; as if she could save Wharton from six years of hate that way. Well, it was in his savage mood to play up to her, to pretend also, to let her think for a little while that he could be bought off by this fluttering make-believe. It would make revenge the sweeter.

He went into the other room and sat down by the stove, in full sight of Wharton. But now he was watching Jenni, not Wharton. And Wharton was watching her, too—watching her unerring fingers pick out and sound the note of the primitive brute in the man beside her.

Leconter grinned at her. The little fool with her make-believe! But she did it well. And she was beautiful, his word on it. Or was it really make-believe? He watched her, and the evils of his own past life rose up to cloud his eyes. His breath came faster. Make-believe or not, he was responsive to her. She bent near him. The lamplight through her hair shone like gold, and dazzled him. Her neck was so white, it made him think of a dogwood blossom. He thought of a dogwood blossom bruised with the wind, of white flesh bruised with fingers. His hands twitched, his drunken eyes would have hurt a good woman. Surely—

But Jenni smiled her sidelong smile, saying softly: "Your coat's soaked; let me take it."

She took it from his hands; her own did not avoid his touch. She knelt near him, holding it to the stove. Even in the heat of the stove, he was aware of her delicate warmth beside him. Each moment she was lighting a fire—the ignorant, brave little fool—with her perilous make-believe. Or *was* it?

IN the other room, Wharton dragged himself inch by inch nearer the edge of the bed, nearer to the gun. His body felt drifty and light, as if a touch would stir it; but it was as unmanageable as wood. He fixed the life of body, brain, and will on that present necessity—his rifle. His haggard eyes ached to it. But there sat a horror behind his eyes. In his flesh was a thorn of fear that made his fear of Leconter a shadow. Murder was a shadow to this appalling strangeness that threatened him. Death was a shadow to this somber wonder, crying in his ears with a voice he could not shut out:

Jenni! Jenni! A woman's natural art? A wife's instinct for any sacrifice? Or—? Jenni! Not that way. Not that. Even playin' at it. Jenni. How did the child guess? How did she *know?* Oh, God, the gun in my hand, and him against the sights. And then—and then. Jenni! Jenni!

". . . And so lonely, you wouldn't believe." The voice drawled as languidly as honey from the other room. "Not but what the cabin's nice at night, so still and warm, with the lamp goin'. I like the lamplight; don't you, Mr. Leconter?"

"I like the dark better."

A low laugh. Jenni! Jenni!

Wharton's senses spun, centering on thought like a wheel on its axis—round and round, round and round. Had he fainted on the sound of that laugh? He did not know. He was on the edge of the bed. How long had he taken to get there? The rifle was within five feet of him. One spring would take him to it. Had he strength to make the spring? Had he time before Leconter saw, and drew?

Jenni was giving him time. She was holding Leconter in the other room. She was carving these few intolerable minutes out of Time for him. Only a few minutes: not thirty—not twenty. If she could hold Leconter, he might do it. One minute more.

But how did she know the way to hold Leconter there, even for one moment?

Oh, God, the rifle. He could never ask her that. He would rather Jake had shot him right off. And she was doing it for him. Pretending. Or—was she?

A murmur of voices:

"How you stare, Mr. Leconter. What do you see?"

"Will I tell you what I see?"

"Yes. The lamplight shinin' in my eyes, like in yours?"

"No."

"Some one once told me there was a word in my eyes."

"I could tell you what the word is—in the dark."

Wharton slid his feet to the floor. The rifle. He was not thinking of danger, but of ending those black moments of make-believe—or revelation? A few seconds more. She would give him that—she had given him so much. Had she given him everything but the truth? Was she giving him that *now?* The rifle!

Wharton had the rifle to his shoulder, the sights steady on that black shape in the dim red stove-glow —Leconter holding Jenni in his arms. But she was between him and Leconter

In the other room, the lamp was suddenly turned out.

Wharton had the rifle in his hands. He did not know how he reached it. He had it to his shoulder, leveled, and as he had prayed, the sights were steady on that black shape in the dim red stove-glow—Leconter holding Jenni in his arms, his face to hers. But she was between him and Leconter.

"Jenni!"

The white disk of her face jerked back toward him. Her voice, too, seemed to tear free, a high wild cry, hardly recognizable:

"Shoot, Lew! Don't wait! Shoot! Never mind me! *Shoot me too, Lew.*"

A SMASH of glass in the room where she was, a red concussion that rocked Wharton where he stood. He had not fired. A man outside had thrust a gun through the window-pane and shot Leconter down.

Wharton slid to the floor like water, the rifle clattering beside him. Jenni ran to him, crouched beside him, but did not touch him.

Men, streaming with rain, entered the cabin. They lifted Wharton to the bed again. They spoke with Jenni, questioning her. They lifted Leconter, too, from the floor. He was groaning. They bandaged his shoulder where the bullet had entered.

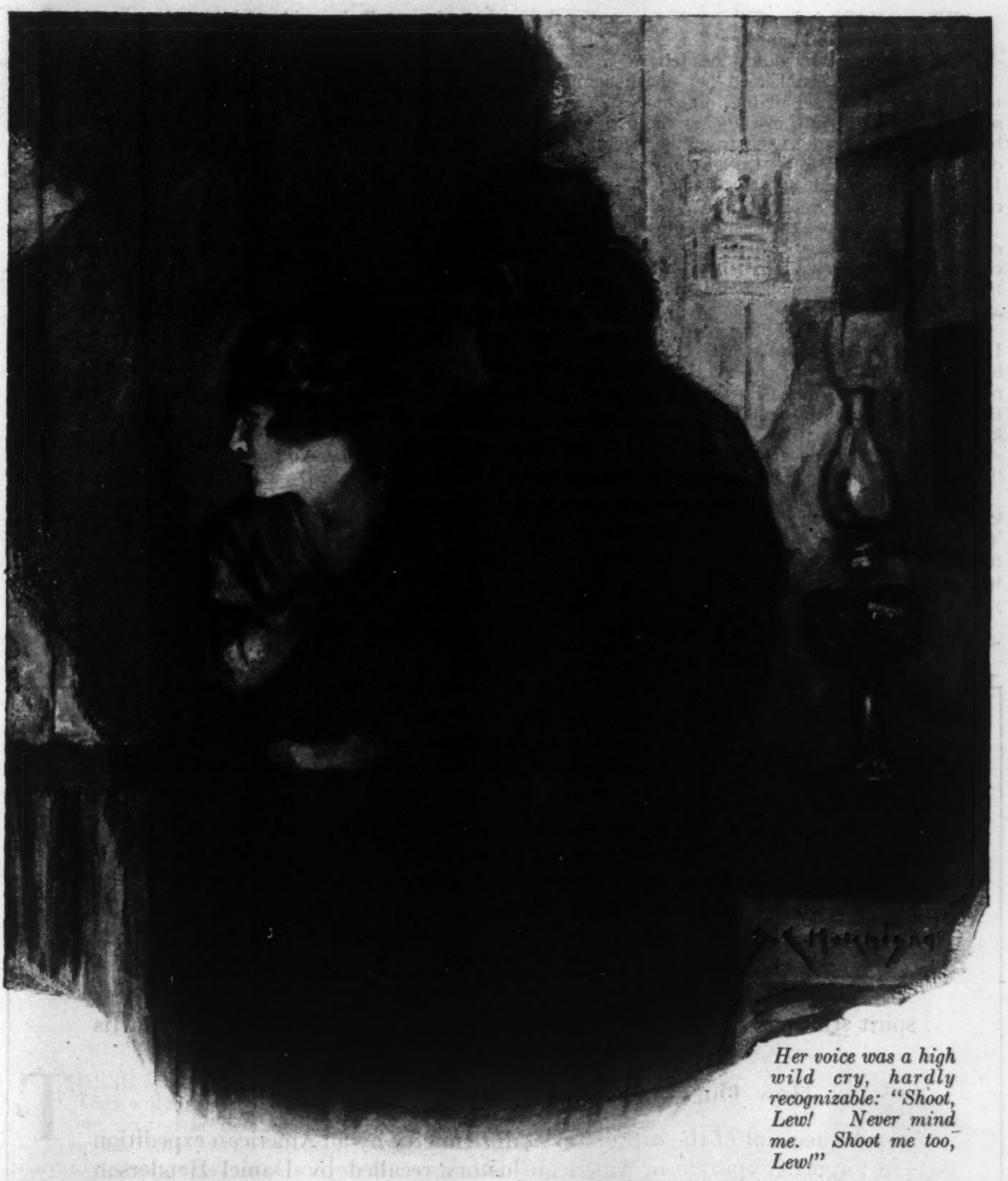
Wharton tried to follow all they did, all they said. He could not. There was a cloud on his mind. He saw the man who had shot Leconter standing aside, looking sullenly on while the others tended him. They were angry with this man. Leconter had shot his brother. Wharton thought vaguely, "Ah, but there's worse than bein' shot—"

After more talk, the men took Leconter away—into the rain.

And quiet, as if it had also been waiting its time outside, entered and again took possession of the cabin on the Chickamin. That storm of danger and violence was gone. Gone like the storm that is life. To Wharton, in his weakness, it was as if a hand had descended and swept the scene clear. There was no sound but that of the flames whickering in the stove, the falling of the winter rain, patient, inevitable—on the forest, on the roof, on the just and the unjust, on the quick and the dead.

Wharton and Jenni were alone.

In his weakness, he was confused to know why



Her voice was a high wild cry, hardly recognizable: "Shoot, Lew! Never mind me. Shoot me too, Lew!"

that solitude, which had seemed so exquisitely right, held now fear, doubt, darkness. Then his mind cleared. He looked, trembling, for the first time at the girl.

A LITTLE tired, broken thing, huddled there again by the bed—staring, not at him, but at the door: the door on the past, which he had told her to open. She was blanched, untidy. That candle of sad beauty she had known how to light in herself for Leconter was quite extinguished. For a terrible moment she was strange in Wharton's eyes, a stranger, the girl from the store at Rexon River that he had married without knowing one thing about her. Jenni—a stranger. And she had saved his life!

The words fairly twisted from his lips: "Jenni—"

She turned her small somber face to him.

"Jenni. What you done then—for me—what—"

His voice broke. He could not ask her. He lay and looked—looked at the strange, wise, dying soul that gazed back at him out of Jenni's eyes.

There was no speech between them, no question asked or answered. There was a confession in everything Jenni did. She rose slowly, and put on her cap and coat. She regulated the draft of the stove and pulled a little saucepan farther over the heat. She hesitated.

Then she turned from the door of that room from which she had seemed to look on the future, and went slowly to the door that had admitted the past.

"What you doin', Jenni?"

"Goin' away from you, Lew."

"Why you goin' by that door, Jenni?"

"This door." She leaned her cheek against it, tearless, so robbed of all life, all emotion, that she seemed like the lovely clothing of these things, left behind. "It seemed to me from the beginnin' this door *looked back*—into all I'd left, into the life where I should 'a' stopped, and not done you the hurt of comin' into yours.

"And I was scared the past'd some way follow me, come in by that door. Now it has. I thought it'd come with a face on it I knew. It came with a strange face and no thought of me. But now you know me as you never done before.

"It was like as if I'd gone before you, dressed as I'd no right to dress. And that strange man, that bad man who'd 'a' killed you, he put me back into my right clo'es. It was like as if I'd hid from you. And that murderer's hand, the hand of a man I never even knew was alive in the world, was sent here to show me —that man, come just to pull a curtain by and say, 'Look at here, what she is, the Thing!'

"I got to go. There's no ways out. Now you know. I'd ask your forgiveness; but I don't want it 'thout your—love. I'd ask you to forgive me not tellin' you. But if it was all to do again, I wouldn't tell you! For by not tellin' I've had a summer as your wife."

Her eyes shone on him suddenly. "You'd never have known," she said, with singular gentleness, "if I hadn't had to save you—the way *I* knew. Think o' that when you think of me. But now you do know, I got to go. Back into my past again, but not the past I owned before. For now I've known you. Back into *your* past. So you'll think of me—as somethin' lovin' you—gone by—over an' done a long while ago.

"Life's queer. Men, they can go down a hundred times. The world'll let them up again. There's not a place a man can get into, but there's a way out. But there's no way out for me—but this door—back into the past again. Because I'm a woman—because I love you—"

HER dream-voice failed, died. She fumbled blindly at the wooden latch of that door. She heard nothing for a little while, saw nothing.

Then she cried, violently, wildly, as a risen soul might cry who had not believed in resurrection:

"Lew!"

Wharton had come slowly from the bed. He had taken a hammer and nails from the shelf. Staggering, he came to her, and looked down. His face was white.

There was something divine in his eyes as he said:

"There's always a way out, if there's love."

Leaning over her, with heavy, wavering strokes he drove the nails home.

He had nailed up the door on the past.

Coming in the April McClure's

In addition to the strong fiction and illuminating articles for the April McCLURE'S announced elsewhere in this issue, the magazine will contain the following:

The Sky Sheriff

A thrilling story of the Texas Airplane Patrol, showing that the pioneer spirit still lives on the prairies of the Southwest . . by Thomson Burtis

How Our Forefathers Met a Turkish Problem

An account of the capture of a Moslem city by an American expedition —a forgotten episode in American history recalled by Daniel Henderson

What Is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?

A timely and informative article . . . . by Alida Sims Malkus

The Story of a Bad Boy

Given up by his family as incorrigible at the age of nine, a probation officer discovered the good in him . . . by Elizabeth Gertrude Stern

My Impression of Twilight Sleep

A Personal Experience Told by Ruth Hale

Ruth Hale, whose husband is Heywood Broun, the novelist and critic, tells in this article of her personal experience with Twilight Sleep, which was first brought to the attention of the American public by McCLURE'S MAGAZINE. *In early numbers* McCLURE'S *will publish other important articles on the growth of the Twilight Sleep movement*

THESE will be the accents of intense irritation. They will hark back to the time when I had not yet arrived at my later—and present—philosophic calm about Twilight Sleep. This narrative of my experiences will revive in me that fierce purpose to have other women believe me—believe in Twilight Sleep, and spare themselves the absolutely unnecessary agonies of bearing children, which tore at me eight years ago when I told what I had seen, and again four years ago when I told what I had experienced.

I have never had the fine serenity of the perfect witness. I went bolting headlong from the attitude of tremendous insistence to that of disgusted counsel-keeping indifference.

My last word on Twilight Sleep was, in fact, spoken in a hospital, in a fit of inopportunity and bad manners and strong feeling, now nearly three years ago. I had gone to see a friend and her new baby. She was not the first woman I had told about Twilight

Heywood Broun—who has made his young son the hero of many a sparkling paragraph

Sleep, nor was she the first to disregard me. But she was the first from whom I sensed the true meaning of that bewildering tone of apology I had heard so many times before. It dawned on me suddenly, and a wild fury with it.

"Look here," I said hotly, "don't get the idea that you're doing me any favor by having Twilight Sleep. I told you how to spare your own self suffering, not how to spare me. It's nothing to me. If you want to suffer, suffer! If you haven't got any mind of your own, and want to agonize for somebody else's ignorance, agonize. What's it to me—what could it be to me? After all, I can have my own babies with Twilight Sleep, and all the rest of you can go to blazes."

And then and there I went into the silences on the subject. If I come out of them now, it is because I want to carry a little banner with McCLURE'S MAGAZINE, which has been so gallant and stout-hearted in the whole effort to make Twilight Sleep known to women. Those who do not know about it are entitled to—to know every angle of personal or general experience that can be brought forward. Those who do know about it and have been too timid to avail themselves of it can, for all of me at least, go right back to their pains.

Besides all of which, evidence for Twilight Sleep, which exists in such abundance, should be brought more and more into general knowledge. Although I personally lose my temper, I know that that is hardly the way to discharge a good citizen's duties. After all, the reason women are fearful of Twilight Sleep is that it is strange; that proportionately few women have had any experience with it; that, in default of a body of exact science on the subject, the whole business of child-bearing has been conducted according to old wives' tales, both in and out of the medical profession, and is therefore the most fertile field still left to the power of notions as opposed to facts.

It is all too easy for a physician to play safe by hinting at possible and probable dangers in anything new to him; and, after all, a hesitation on the part of an expectant mother to destroy, or impair, life is nothing to be surprised at. Probably almost anybody about to take another life would hesitate a little. If doctors dare to face a woman with such an alternative, it is, after all, only because they too are as ignorant, and as fearful, as the rest of humanity. Obviously, the only thing to do is to have patience, put out more and more exact knowledge about Twilight Sleep, and hold up your head in the face of the dumbest and most exasperating kind of opposition.

The rest of this testimony shall be made, then, without rancor, and nothing shall be hereinafter stated that is not susceptible of proof by any number of witnesses, in the event that anybody cares enough about it to ask.

McCLURE'S EARLY MESSAGE OF MERCY

SHORTLY after the first appearance of the stories from Freiburg of the Twilight Sleep hospital there, sent to McCLURE'S MAGAZINE and published by it in June and October, 1914, some of the American physicians who had studied the scopolamine-morphine treatment in Germany made some preliminary experiments in this country. My own entry into the question came late in October of that year, when McCLURE'S MAGAZINE decided to send Anna Steese Richardson out on a lecture tour of the country, to try to raise a fund for a central Twilight Sleep clinic in which American doctors could be taught how to use it. The reiterated demand of everybody who had had any experience with scopolamine anesthesia was that it should always and only be delivered by an expert. That demand is as loudly made to-day.

However, McCLURE'S MAGAZINE was prepared to make this expertness accessible to American physicians, and Mrs. Richardson and I were sent out into the highways to see what we could do. It was my duty to go ahead and hire the halls, and Mrs. Richardson's to follow with the proofs and the persuasions. When we talked it over beforehand, I congratulated myself on having the easy part of the job. Mrs. Richardson, in her wisdom, kept quiet. I was soon enough to know why. Our first large city was Philadelphia. We planned to cover all the districts and some of the suburbs, and to wind up with a mass meeting at a huge auditorium in North Broad Street. Mrs. Richardson planned to lecture twice a day, so we gave ourselves five days in which to make our territory.

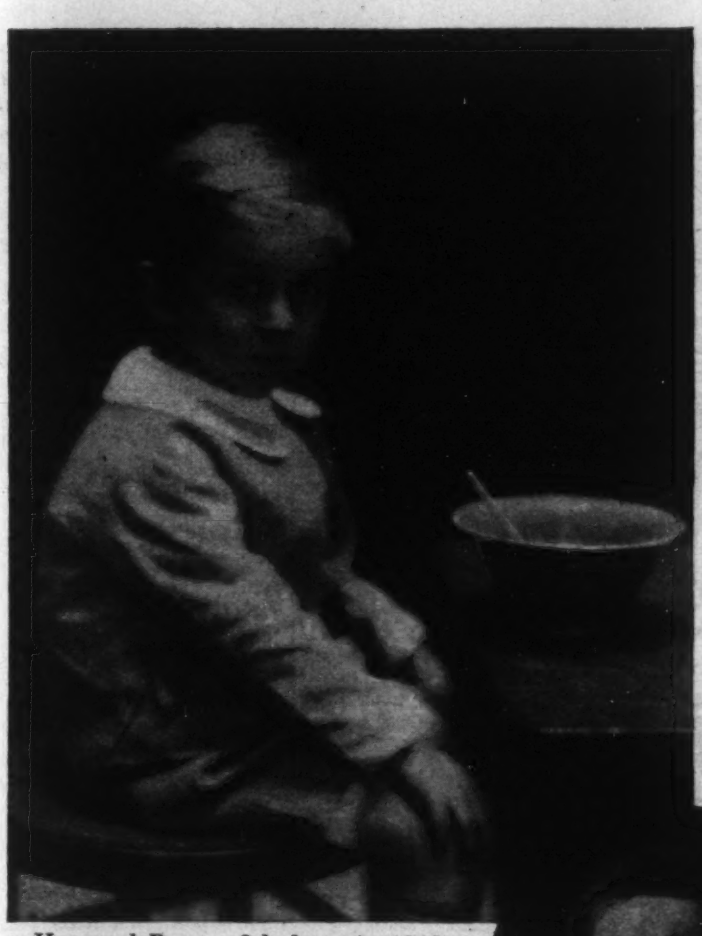
FIRST THOUSAND TWILIGHT SLEEP CASES

WE felt ourselves to be admirably primed. We had both seen and talked to many mothers in Gouverneur and Long Island College hospitals, where Twilight Sleep had been used in more than a thousand cases and where subsequent histories had been kept. It was, in fact, on the basis of the first thousand of these cases that Twilight Sleep received the indorsement of the New York County Medical Society. In addition to this, Mrs. Richardson had made wide research, not only into the experiences of the American physicians but into those of Germany, and she had statements from many men of indisputable authority in medical work. Then, finally, we had a Twilight Sleep baby, who, thank heaven, was a good and sweet child, since Twilight Sleep, whatever its other virtues, can not make a good-tempered baby out of a natural hellion. The baby was for afternoon appearances only.

It was no time after my arrival in Philadelphia till we had our schedule down pat. I had hired the theaters, halls, and what not, and had begun my advertising and ordered my bill-boardings. Then a mysterious thing began to happen to us. One by one, the halls I had contracted for were snatched away from me, by telephone, by wire, by letter—all without explanation. As fast as I could fill one gap, another appeared. I began to have some low suspicions, and I still have them—but this is a story of fact.

Then the big and to us vital mass meeting at the auditorium was called off. This I could not bear without a protest, so I went at once to the man who was at the head of it. He told me candidly that Twilight Sleep was a quack business, that it had no medical standing, and that, contract or no contract, I could not have his hall. I asked him whether he would reconsider if I would have sent to him from New York the indorsements of the County Medical Society, the distinguished physicians who had tried it, and others who knew. I reminded him that he himself had been a famous fighter in his early and unorthodox days, and, what with one thing and another, I got a stay of execution for our mass meeting.

I wired to New York, and McCLURE'S MAGAZINE sent him, by special delivery, all the volume of proof we had. I heard nothing from him for two days, so I called again. He sent word by his secretary that he had received no proof, and the less seen of me



Heywood Broun, 3d, born in 1918; his mother, Ruth Hale, one of the earliest exponents of Twilight Sleep in this country, tells now of her personal experience with it

Young Heywood at the age of one year

around there the better. I went to the post-office to discover what had become of our special-delivery letter, and the postman showed me a receipt for it, signed by that man's own hand. It seemed to me then the basest perfidy. When I saw him several years later, and, instead of staggering under all the blights I had that morning called down on him, found him still as rosy and happy as ever, I taxed him with his betrayal. "Oh," he said, "I did not mean that I did not get the letter; I only meant that it did not impress me."

What the Medical Men Told Us

AT any rate, the Philadelphia tour suffered severely. And on the night we intended to leave, Mrs. Richardson and I were invited to a meeting of the Philadelphia County Medical Society.

That was an amazing meeting. We were told there that God wanted women to suffer in childbirth, and that it was sinful to avoid the suffering; that women didn't suffer, anyway, nearly so much as they let on, and that, even when they did, they forgot it immediately afterward. And finally, in all known forms of circumlocution, we were told that all the women since the world began had suffered these "natural" pains, and that nothing could begin to prevent them at this late stage.

After visiting a few smaller cities, the war forced us to abandon the campaign for a central clinic. I feel sure the campaign will some day be reopened, and probably the campaigners will be met with the town band and the key to the city. As at Gallipoli, it is hard to tell from the bombarder's side how near the citadel is to falling, and the last half-hour before the victory looks as bleak as the first. But oppositions like citadels fall with a rush when they start.

However, the opposition was presenting its customary fine front when, four years later, I came back from France with my husband, Heywood Broun, to tackle the Twilight Sleep for myself.

I announced this at once; and the resultant uproar was deafening. I was treated to alternate régimes of violent argument and brooding silences. I reminded both family and friends that, after all, this was something I knew something about—that I had worked with it, seen it, tested it. Yet persons who had not troubled to inform themselves at all on the subject—women who were absolute strangers to me, but who were known to members of my family or my husband's family—wrote to warn me that I was virtually about to commit murder. I can not imagine where it all came from.

I could not then, and I can not now, discover what caused this wave of silly terror: because it *was* terror—terror on my behalf and on behalf of the expected baby. Besides, though many of them claimed that they believed it right and normal for women to bear the pains of childbearing with every hideous awareness, none of my opponents were honestly against Twilight Sleep on principle. People are never quite so stupid as the things they say, and that it should somehow be pious to suffer is too idiotic to be believed by anybody. Therefore, when people say things such as that, it becomes necessary to peer behind their verbal breastworks and find out what it really all is. The long and short of it was that my acquaintances were panicky. They couldn't quite remember what they had heard about Twilight Sleep, but it was something very ominous.

Finally I argued no more. I waited, with the minimum of patience, till one Sunday afternoon I noticed an extraordinary little pain which seemed to come and go with a remarkable regularity. Nothing like that had ever happened to me, so I called the doctor on the telephone. He suggested that I'd better get in a taxicab. Once at the hospital, we all began to time these pains with a stop-watch. Finally the doctor said he would start me to sleeping.

Presently the nurse touched my cheek and asked, "Don't you want to come downstairs now?"

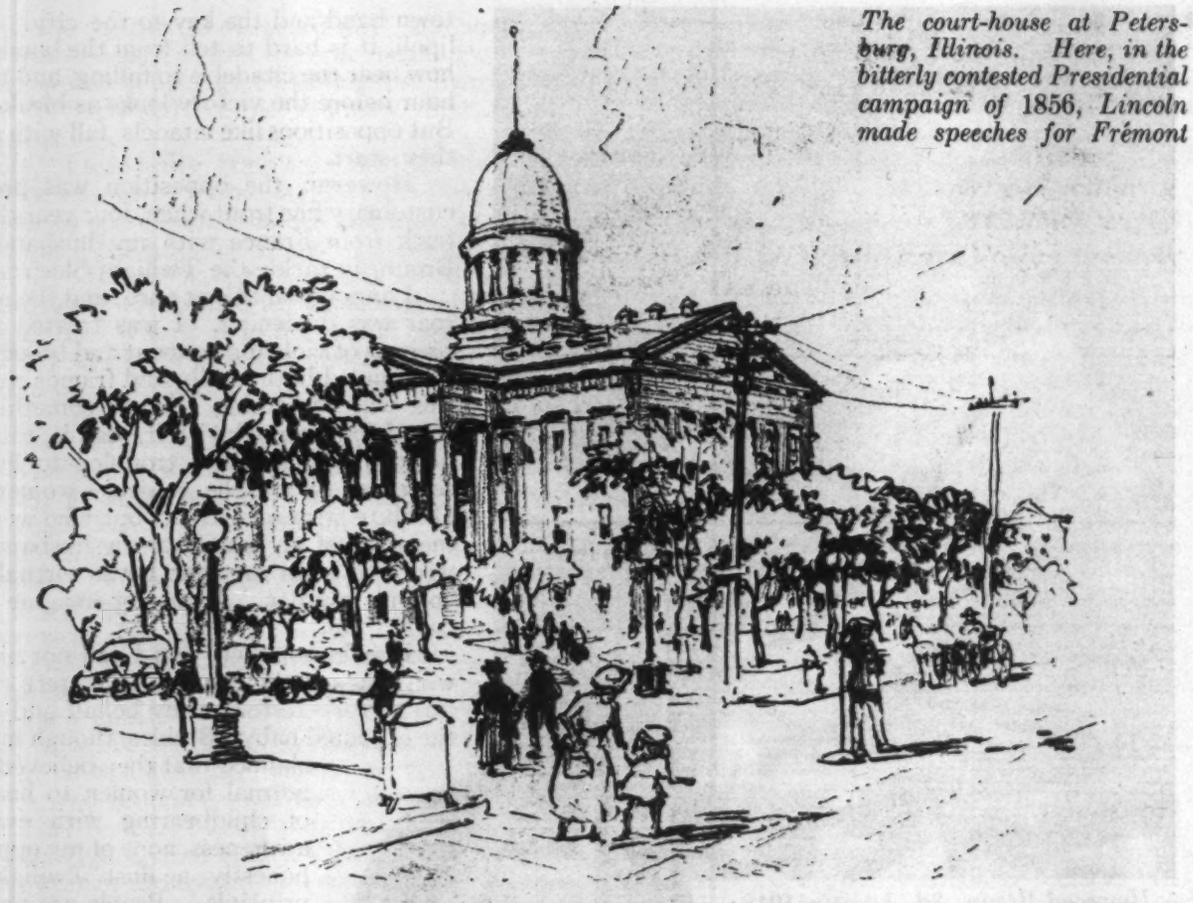
"Well," I said, "will he be born to-morrow?"

The nurse laughed. "He's born now," she said.

It was Sunday evening. By morning I was on the top of the world again, with no memories, no exhaustion, no fear, and no shock.

This is the story I told up and down, up and down, wherever a woman would listen to me. Until that day, concerning which I spoke earlier, when my friend in the hospital revealed to me the fact that the time for my evidence was not yet. This gorgeous beneficence to women was at the mercy of stupid gabble.

But people are never quite so stupid as the things they say. That gabble is now, if not past, at least passing. It can't pass a day too soon.



The court-house at Petersburg, Illinois. Here, in the bitterly contested Presidential campaign of 1856, Lincoln made speeches for Frémont

Intimate Recollections of Abraham Lincoln

By Henry B. Rankin

In collaboration with Neil M. Clark

IN 1856 I entered the law office of Lincoln and Herndon at Springfield, Illinois, as a student. For more than four years, until Abraham Lincoln went to Washington as President, I was close to him and familiar with his daily life and activities.

I had known him before, as a frequent visitor at the home of my parents. I also met him often at Petersburg, Illinois, when he was riding the circuit of the country courts. My father was sheriff of Menard County, and during court sessions I was permitted to quit school and act as a page, in which capacity I ran errands for the lawyers.

I have now reached my eighty-sixth year. Few men still living can draw on their personal recollections for an intimate picture of Lincoln. Therefore, if I set down here some of the things I remember, it is in no spirit of personal vanity, but gratefully, reverently, hoping that through my eyes the men and women of this generation may perhaps see him better.

The Lincoln and Herndon law office was up a flight of stairs so narrow that two people walking abreast rubbed elbows. I recall very well one day when several of us were sitting around the table in the center of the room. Mr. Herndon and Dr. Newton Bateman, State superintendent of public instruction, whose office adjoined ours, were present, also another student and myself. We were discussing with some heat Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," a volume that had then just been published. Mr. Lincoln was at work in a corner of the room, deeply engrossed, taking no part in the talk and apparently giving it no attention.

Our office, I should say, was far from elaborate. It was a simple back room on the second floor. The windows looked out on a roof coated with tar and pebbles. On hot summer days the tar softened, and the breeze, if there happened to be any, wafted a powerful resinous odor into the room.

As we talked about Whitman, marked differences of opinion arose. The morals and literary taste of most of those present were several times called in question. At length we finished our discussion and went back to work.

After a while, Lincoln, whom we had supposed not to be listening, arose and took the book. That was the first time he had seen it, although its publication had already created a furore of discussion and in some quarters a violence of disapprobation which it is difficult for the reader of this day to comprehend. Mr. Lincoln turned the pages, and after some time he did an unusual thing. He began to read aloud, continuing from poem to poem with a growing relish. We often paused to hear him read newspaper clippings at the office, but he rarely read poetry to us.

Picture him on that occasion. He read slowly. As yet he had almost no gray hairs. His weight was about one hundred and eighty pounds, and his face was clean shaven. Wrinkles across his forehead and the deep curved lines on his cheeks had already marked the man of fifty. His neck was neat and trim, bearing with dignity the head that sculptors have since modeled so variously. His body movements were rather slow, not in the least nervous or impulsive. His manner of reading was impressive. The emphasis he gave to certain passages interpreted many meanings and beauties in the text which the rest of us had not discovered.

We of course did not then know how great a man was in our midst. Yet I am not calling imagination to the aid of memory when I say that there was some indefinable quality about Mr. Lincoln which impressed those of us who were with him that he was meant to fulfill a great destiny.

I never had any hesitancy about going to Mr. Lincoln with a question regarding a point of law. He never dismissed me with impatience. If he knew the answer to my question, he stated it. His mind acted quickly on all subjects or questions he had fully investigated, and on which he had settled, firm convictions. When not settled, however, he was apt to be secretive and reticent. This habit resulted in his being often misquoted and misjudged. He was likely to dodge exact replies by evasive answers, or by an anecdote that would camouflage and thus dismiss the subject or the questioner.

Lincoln was not, strictly speaking, a good office lawyer. It was irksome to him to lounge in the office, unless he were engaged in drawing legal papers or examining titles or preparing memoranda in brief to use in circuit-court cases or argumentative briefs in supreme-court cases. While at these he was oblivious to everything else. His concentration was intensively exclusive of all else. He never half-worked.

But when the work was accomplished he was not disposed to remain in the office. He would leave to call in at Diller's drug store, or at one of the dry-goods stores, to meet a friendly group in the counting-room.

The stores were social centers to a far greater extent then than they are now. A curious incident comes to my mind regarding Judge Logan, Lincoln's second law partner, and a man frequently found in the Lincoln group in Diller's drug store. The Judge was a great whittler. He was one of the richest men in Springfield, and sometimes exceedingly irascible. His favorite occupation while engaged in conversation was to whittle the arms of Diller's chairs. At length they began to look so bad that Diller ordered new ones. The Judge noticed them at once, of course.

"You're getting mighty fine here, Diller!" he said.

"Yes, Judge," Mr. Diller said. "You know, you whittled the old chairs till they weren't fit to be seen. I've got a nice pile of white pine boards here, and I hope you'll whittle on them and not mar these new chairs."

The Judge gave a snort, then rose and stalked out, thoroughly insulted!

Two or three days passed. One morning the irascible whittler struck his head in at the counting-room.

"Well, Diller," he piped,—he had a high tenor voice,—"I had to come back. I couldn't stay away any longer!"

Learning to Know People

THE same was true of Lincoln. He could not stay away, and it was perhaps fortunate that he did not, for in those talks in homely surroundings with all manner of men he sharpened his wits in debate, and learned to know people so well that he rarely made a mistake in sizing them up and judging their motives; yet—though he was intimate and constantly associated with men to whom the minor and less minor vices were not unknown—he never contracted their vices.

Most usually, in the years when I was a student in his office, Mr. Lincoln, when in Springfield and not at the office, was at the State Library. He did much

The Sangamon River, along the banks of which Lincoln often rode between Springfield and Petersburg

reading there, and he chatted with the State officials and his friends. He always appeared at the office before going home for lunch, to see if anything there required his attention. To him the office was a work-shop, not a loafing-place. He never neglected a client's case, and was precise and exact in preparing it.

He left home for the office, usually, between eight and nine in the morning; but he would often tarry on the street or drop in at some of his favorite haunts, if he knew of no pressing legal work at the office demanding his early arrival. In the ordinary ways of his home life in Springfield, it would be difficult to say just where he could be found at any given hour any day. But fewer than half a dozen places could be limited as the ones where he could be found, and an office student sent out for him needed to go no farther than around the State House square.

Lincoln's manner on the street was generally cheerful, with a nod or a handshake and sometimes a few minutes' chat for any friends or neighbors he met. If he was mentally preoccupied, however, he passed rapidly with long strides, looking neither to right nor left but directly in front of him, absorbed in his thoughts and giving first salute to no one. But even at such times, if a friend or acquaintance he was passing accosted him, he awoke out of this reverie to his usual genial self, shook hands, and chatted in a friendly manner for a few minutes.

Under protracted mental strain his mind gave him little bodily wear or fatigue. In this respect he was exceptional and above any other man I ever met. His physical endurance was his great asset at the bar in long protracted lawsuits and in political campaigns that wore out his colleagues and opponents, and it equipped him marvelously for the unparalleled strain of his Presidential years.

Mrs. Lincoln's Care of His Health

MRS. LINCOLN, by her attention, had much to do with preserving his physical vigor. She was careful to see that he ate his meals regularly, and that he was personally neat. He was not inclined naturally to give much thought to his clothes, and if Mrs. Lincoln happened to be away from Springfield for a few days on a trip to St. Louis or Chicago, we were pretty sure to be apprised of her absence by the disorder of Mr. Lincoln's clothes.

Few men were so modest, few so humble in their own opinion of themselves, as he. He measured the hearts of those with whom he came in contact, and he rarely measured wrongly. I recall vividly the first political speech I ever heard Lincoln make. It was in the days when I was a boy in the Menard County court.

Affairs were conducted in a neighborly, informal fashion, and one day court was conveniently adjourned for several hours at noon. The purpose, as everybody tacitly understood, was to allow an opportunity for political speech-making. It was a convenient time for that purpose, inasmuch as considerable crowds had assembled for the sessions of the court. A platform, rude but large, had been erected in one corner of the court-house yard.

Here, on the day in question, a group of local notables and politicians sat along two benches at the rear of the platform, and presently came cries of "Lincoln! Lincoln! Abe Lincoln!" Mr. Lincoln, never in a hurry to begin a speech, rose, deposited his tall hat under the bench, and advanced to the front. Most of those before him were old friends.

The floor of the platform was about on a level with a man's shoulders. Lincoln had begun to speak when a man known to all of us, James Pantier, arrived, and pushed up to the platform, and stood on the ground there with his folded arms resting on the floor. He was almost directly in front of the speaker, and from that position he gazed directly up into Lincoln's face.

We boys watched Pantier with interest. He was a curious product of the backwoods. A pioneer, he had retained many of the characteristics of the original woodsmen. A hunter, trapper, faith doctor, saw-mill-owner, and farmer, he was a firm friend of Abraham Lincoln; but his clothes were a queer admixture for a gathering at the county seat, while his hat, which had long since lost its brim from the combined effects of storm and long usage, rested at the extreme back of his head. Uncle Jimmie, as we called him, was able to tell wonderful stories of adventure from his recollection of frontier days, and on that account we boys liked to get him to talk. However, being unfamiliar with the proprieties of platform procedure, he was naturally not prepared to observe them. He had come to see his friend Abraham Lincoln and to hear him speak, and at the first opportunity he said:

"Howdy, Abe." A moment's silence, then—"Howdy, Abe—howdy, Abe."

He spoke twice before Lincoln heard him, and three times before Lincoln saw where the voice came from. Then, perceiving who had addressed him, Lincoln greeted him cordially.

"Why, how are you, Uncle Jimmie!" he said, and leaning down shook hands heartily.

Still holding the old man's hand, he led him along the front of the platform to the steps and brought him up. There was no seat but that which Lincoln himself had just vacated, and he led Uncle Jimmie to that and sat him down. There, between Judge Treat and the Hon. B. S. Edwards, two of the most dignified and aristocratic members of the community, Uncle Jimmie sat, not quite at his ease, while Lincoln returned to the front of the platform and continued his speech.

His battered old hat bothered the pioneer. He did not know what to do with it. Finally, seeing Lincoln's tall hat under the bench, he twisted up his own and stuck it in that, along with the papers and news clippings with which it was already half filled. Still, however, something apparently disquieted him. Finally he remembered; and, leaning forward in his place, he spoke again to Lincoln.

"Abe!" he said, "Abe! I forgot to ax you about how Mary and the babies were?"

Lincoln broke off his speech and turned to Uncle Jimmie. In a low voice he replied:

"All well when I left them at Springfield yesterday morning, Uncle Jimmie; all very well, thank you!"

He resumed his speech where he had broken off. Throughout there had been not the slightest trace of impatience or embarrassment or condescension in his demeanor, no suggestion that Uncle Jimmie had violated the proprieties. There was that in Lincoln's conduct toward others, then and always, which transcended manners. It was the very spirit of human kindliness from which all true manners spring.

I can illustrate that quality in him by another experience. One day I entered the office with a book under my arm. I had just come with it from the binders, and I found Mr. Lincoln alone.

"Why, Henry," he said, "what have you got there?"

He took the book and thumbed through its pages. They were blank. On the front cover, stamped in gold letters, was the one word "Autographs." I explained the use of the book to Mr. Lincoln, and said that I had brought it to him for the first signature.

"That is the first book for such a purpose I ever saw," Mr. Lincoln said. And then he took his pen and wrote on the first page the following words:

To-day, Feb. 23, 1858, the owner honored me with the privilege of writing the first name in this book.

A. LINCOLN.

Two years later the author of those lines was elected to the Presidency. I was a mere boy who could not have meant much, one way or the other, to him. Yet he wrote in my book after that fashion! There was in his vast soul no room for aught save humility and courtesy, "with malice toward none and charity for all."

A SPEECH AT PETERSBURG

YET it must not be supposed that Lincoln was not aggressive. In my memory there is another picture of him on the platform. This time his audience did not cry out for him. On the contrary, they cried out against him and tried to hoot him down. It was at Petersburg, again before people many of whom he knew, but feeling ran high, for it was during the bitterly contested Frémont-Buchanan-Fillmore campaign of 1856.

Lincoln, as he told Herndon and me afterward, was wholly unprepared for the violence of the scene upon which he came. It was a beautiful crisp autumn morning. In the stage he had ridden for miles along the slow-flowing Sangamon. Its high wooded banks, the peacefulness of the morning, and the familiar scenes had brought back to him the memories of other days he had spent in those places.

He had been at peace. Then he descended in front of the Menard House, opposite the court-house platform, to find a hooting, yelling crowd, not waiting for him to mount the platform before it gave vocal utterance to their disapproval of the campaign in which he was engaged. Buchanan and Fillmore were names loudly voiced and applauded; but nobody shouted for Frémont, for whom Lincoln had come to speak.

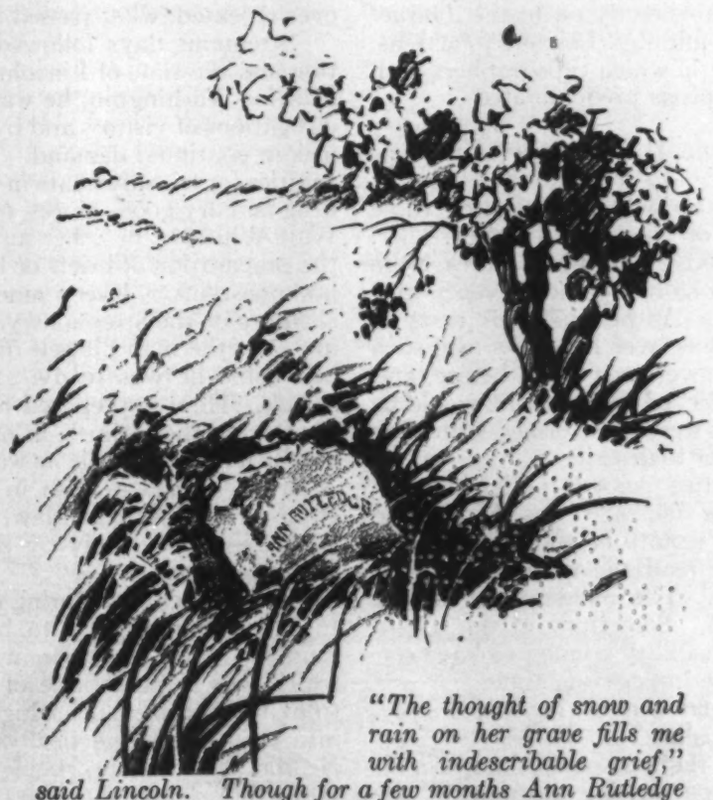
I was in that crowd. I saw Mr. Lincoln towering above neighboring heads as he, in the midst of his scanty campaign committee, shouldered his way through the crowd to the platform and mounted the steps. He handed his hat to a friend, Dr. Stevenson, and walked leisurely to the front of the platform. The shouting redoubled in volume. The intention of the crowd was not to hear him. He stood before them silently, motionless, watching them. Fully half an hour passed. I saw no movement in him during that time except the change in position of his arms and the occasional closing and unclosing of the fingers, in perhaps unconscious aggressiveness.

There came a slight let-up in the roar of voices. The crowd had almost shouted itself out. Passivity had defeated violence. Lincoln then began speaking in a very low voice. Even those nearest to him could scarcely hear what he said. Those farther away could only see the movement of his lips. Curiosity began to get the better of them, one and all, and the few who wanted to hear what he had to say began to call for silence. Gradually the noisy throng relapsed into complete silence and *listened!* They did not approve, but they heard what Mr. Lincoln had to say. He made a powerful impression. That was his victory, even though the results showed he did not do a very good day's business for the campaign committee. There were only six ballots cast for Frémont in Menard County in 1856.

As time passed, after I was in a position close to him, Mr. Lincoln had less and less time to give to the affairs of his office and his private practice. He engaged in the senatorial campaign of 1858, in which he was a candidate and held the celebrated debates with Douglas. His preparation for those debates was most thorough. And during their delivery his circumstances were trying. Mrs. Lincoln remained at home in Springfield, trying to make ends meet financially.

MRS. LINCOLN'S FINANCIAL ANXIETIES

SHE used to come into the office occasionally. Herndon was not over-careful about promptness in financial matters, so Mr. Lincoln intrusted to me the duty of seeing that remittances were properly deposited at the bank and notations made of the amounts and dates. When Mrs. Lincoln came to the office about anything, and Herndon was there, she did not speak to him, but came directly to me for what she wanted and left promptly. She and Herndon had a grudge of long standing, and it was partly on that account that the unbeautiful and untruthful picture of her has come down. Mrs. Lincoln was a loyal wife to Abraham Lincoln, and through many years, during which I had an opportunity to observe the couple under a great variety of circumstances, I never saw anything to warrant the belief that they were not happy in each other's company.



"The thought of snow and rain on her grave fills me with indescribable grief," said Lincoln. Though for a few months Ann Rutledge was engaged to marry Lincoln, she is believed to have died of sorrow over the defection of another man

Mrs. Lincoln kept up the financial fences during her husband's campaign against Douglas. And he, in turn, did his share. Stephen A. Douglas rode around the State in a commodious private car, accompanied by his friends, and with a second car behind on which he had a brass band coached to make Douglas music at every town and hamlet. Mr. Lincoln occupied a seat in the day-coach with the other ordinary passengers.

It was about this time, too, that Mr. Lincoln began his preparation for the great Cooper Institute speech, which probably won him the Presidency and made him, who seemed to Easterners an uncouth figure out of the West, known to the nation. That speech took a great deal of time. And so Mr. Lincoln gave less and less attention to his office duties, although when he was needed to present a case in court, he succeeded in grasping the details of intricate evidence from others with remarkable quickness.

Succeeding these busy times came the convention at Chicago, heralding still busier days and nights. I was present when Mr. Lincoln received the news of his nomination. It was a never-to-be-forgotten time.

On the morning of May 18, 1860, at about nine o'clock, Lincoln looked in at the office. Four or five of us were there, and he said:

"Well, boys, what do you know?"

J. H. Littlefield, my fellow student, told what news we had. Shortly afterward the editor of the *Illinois State Journal*, Edward L. Baker, came with two messages referring to the convention. He left, but returned hurriedly with the report of the first ballot. Lincoln read it without any betrayal of his thought in his expression. Presently he got up and said:

"The despatches appear to be coming to the *Journal* office, by arrangement, I presume; we had better go over there."

We filed out of the office and down the narrow stairs. On our way we passed the office of the telegraph company. Lincoln and several others went up. But Littlefield and I went directly on to the *Journal* office. There in a few minutes Lincoln joined us. We were a curious group, in which typographers with grimy hands and dirty aprons predominated.

How He Received His Nomination

JUST before Lincoln's arrival, the despatch came showing the results of the second ballot. Mr. Baker handed the message to him. Votes were swinging in his direction: he had gained seventy-nine ballots, Seward but ten. As he read this news in absolute silence, there came over Lincoln's face such an expression as I had never seen there before, and never saw again. He believed then that he would be nominated. His features were transformed with a joy that it is beyond my power to describe.

Seven or eight minutes passed, perhaps more, perhaps less. Then the message was handed to Lincoln announcing the results of the third ballot. He was nominated. He read the news and passed the paper to the others. The moment for intense joy with him had passed. Something of the solemnity and the great responsibility seemed to have settled upon his mind in the intervening time.

"I felt sure this would come," he said simply, "when I saw the second ballot."

There was present in the newspaper office a merchant from Boston. Upon hearing the news of the nomination, he said to Lincoln that he should immediately have his life written.

"My friend," said Lincoln, and his mien was unwontedly grave, "I do not see much in my life as yet to write about."

The typos and the friends present gave a rousing cheer. Lincoln was besieged with handshakers, but as soon as he could he turned and went out of the building. On the street he met other friends. He pushed through them.

"There is a lady over yonder on Eighth Street," he said, "who will want to know about this."

And he strode off.

Mrs. Lincoln's Ambition

THUS in the hour of his triumph did he speak gently, in a voice mellow with emotion, of Mrs. Lincoln, for whom most historians and biographers have had little but disparagement or, worse, silence. Mrs. Lincoln was not as history exaggerated her. She was ambitious; but for her ambition, her husband might never have become President. She was quick to speak her mind; for that she suffered more, by defamation, than anybody else. But she was not in any sense a virago. And Abraham Lincoln loved her.

In front of the Marine Bank Building, as Lincoln walked along the street, he was met by the cashier, Robert Irwin. They had been friends for many years. Mr. Irwin had heard the news. The two men clasped hands in complete silence, neither speaking a word. Then Lincoln went on. A little later he was stopped by a messenger-boy from the telegraph office. He receipted for the message there in the street, tore open the envelope, read the news that he was already familiar with, and, holding the paper in his hand, went on to Eighth Street.

I did want to go on home with him then and hear him break the news to Mrs. Lincoln, whom I knew well and whose joy in the news I could foresee. But the moment was too sacred. No eye saw, no tongue ever repeated, what passed between them then.

Strenuous days followed. Between the nomination and the time of Lincoln's departure from Springfield for Washington, he was constantly called on by delegations of visitors and by individuals, and his time was in continual demand. He no longer had opportunities for friendly chats in the counting-rooms of the drug and dry goods stores, or for the casual reading of Walt Whitman or other authors in the office, or for the preparation of briefs or the answering of students' law questions. Every moment was occupied. The shadows of the strenuous years to come were closing in. Yet the man himself did not change. For what had come he was ready. His hour of destiny had struck. He was prepared for it.

During these times, in order to find a quiet place in which to write while he was preparing his Inaugural Address, he had a room in the third story over the store of his brother-in-law, C. M. Smith, where he could be reached only by those who brought a note from Herndon.

I remember once during that time when I was sent to carry some papers to him. I stepped into the humble room. Lincoln was seated at the desk, which was a great piece of furniture with a sloping front for writing, and a high cupboard back divided into many small vertical compartments for papers. He did not look up, being utterly absorbed in his thoughts. I laid the papers quietly beside him and withdrew. On my return to our office, Herndon asked me whether Lincoln had sent back any word.

"He said nothing," I replied. "I believe he did not know I was there."

"That's what I expected," Herndon said. "He wishes nothing now so much as to be left alone."

His Last Visit to His Office

HE visited the office for the last time on February 10, 1861, the evening before his departure for Washington. He and Herndon walked down the narrow stairs and I saw them pass along the street together. There was nothing unusual in their appearance. Lincoln had asked Herndon to leave their shingle in place with both names on it, for it was his intention after his service in Washington to return to Springfield and resume practice as if nothing had happened.

This last evening Herndon asked Lincoln if he had prepared a speech to be delivered on the following morning before the train pulled out of the station. He replied that the train was to depart at an early hour, and he did not suppose there would be anybody out except those who were to go. Herndon, however, said he believed there would be a good many present; and during the night, as I believe, Lincoln very carefully composed a few remarks which for me have always seemed to possess more poignant meaning and power and deep feeling than any other public words he ever spoke—I except not even the address at Gettysburg.

The morning dawned dismal and rainy. There were, I suppose, some two hundred people present in the old station of the Wabash Railroad. When Lincoln and his party arrived, they went directly into the car assigned to them, which was the last one on the train. The hour of departure was imminent, and still Lincoln did not appear to make the anticipated speech. Not all of those present were his political well-wishers, and I heard comments pass among them, such as:

"He won't say anything; he's too fine a man now to talk to *us*."

But almost at the last minute Lincoln appeared. The black hair, which was only beginning to turn gray, rolled back from the lofty brow. He dropped one hand on the brake, and in a calm voice, unusually tender, he spoke these memorable words:

"*My Friends:* No one not in my situation can appreciate my feelings of sadness at this parting. To this place and the kindness of this people I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young man to an old man. Here my children were born and one lies buried.

"I now leave, not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested on the shoulders of Washington.

"Without the aid of that Divine Being who ever aided him, who controls mine and all destinies, I can not succeed. With that assistance I can not fail.

"Trusting in Him who can go with me and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will be well.

"To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you, friends and neighbors, an affectionate farewell."

Notice particularly the final paragraphs. It has been said that Lincoln was not a religious man. But, in my opinion, he was deeply and sincerely religious, more so than some loud in their professions of belief. In support of that I wish to quote, in closing, a part of what Mr. Lincoln once replied to a question from my mother, from whose lips I afterward took down her memory of his words. He said:

"The fundamental truths reported in the four gospels as from the lips of Jesus Christ, and that I first heard from the lips of my mother, are settled and fixed moral precepts with me. I have concluded to dismiss from my mind the detestable wrangles that once perplexed me with distractions that stirred up but never absolutely settled anything. I have tossed them aside with the doubtful differences which divide denominations—sweeping them all out of my mind among the non-essentials. I have ceased to follow such discussions or be interested in them.

"I can not without mental reservations assent to long and complicated creeds and catechisms. If the church would ask simply for assent to the Saviour's statement of the substance of the law: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,'—that church would I gladly unite with."

That kind of faith was in Abraham Lincoln throughout the terrible years of the war, as it was on that somber morning of leave-taking in February. The train started. The President-elect stood without moving, his hand still resting on the brake as when he had spoken his farewell, until the train passed around a curve and was lost to our sight.

That was Abraham Lincoln's last view of Springfield. It was my last view of Abraham Lincoln. I cared not to look upon his face when, four years later, they brought him home from Washington—borne, through tears and broken hearts, on his last journey to his Springfield home and last resting-place.

For All Mankind

THE times and the task demanded such a man, and God gave Abraham Lincoln. Four years before, on an early, somber February morning, he bade with deep emotion his "friends and neighbors an affectionate farewell." Those lips were now voiceless in a casket that bore home a mighty conqueror. He was—but is not now—ours only. He belongs to all mankind, wherever hearts beat loyally for fidelity, for law, for liberty.

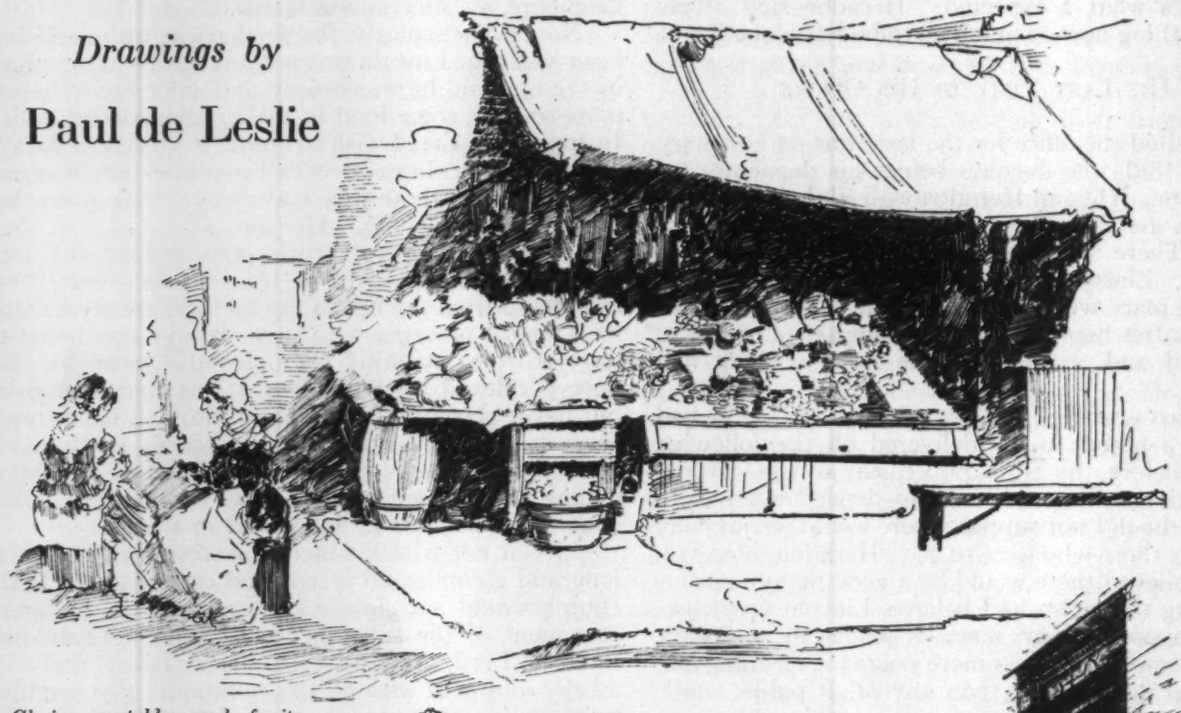
The soul of Lincoln was not there, but gone to the Infinite Love that gave him to us. His life, his character, his example, have not departed forever from us, but remain in the grateful and reverent hearts of the people of his country and of his race, with a fame of which there will be no end.

No, I did not care to look on him in that casket. I recall and think of him as he lived.

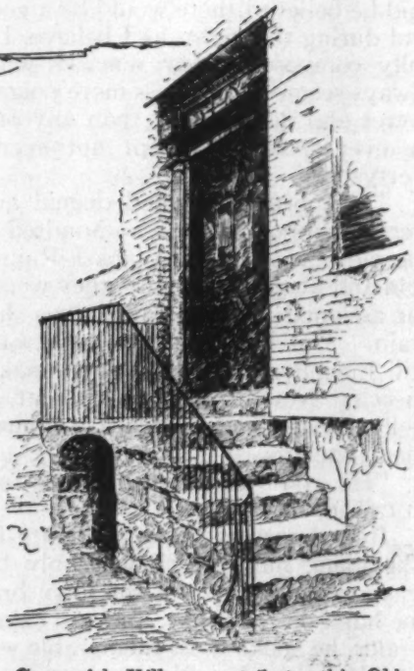
Manhattan from an Artist's Sketch-Book

Drawings by

Paul de Leslie

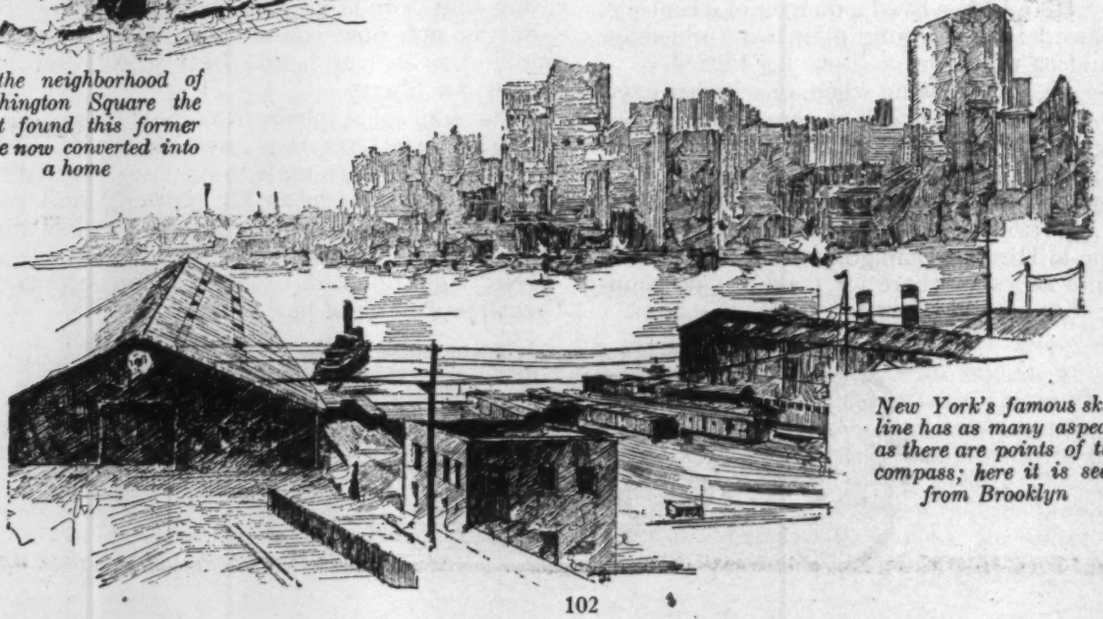


Choice vegetables and fruits may be found on sidewalk stands such as this one in Little Italy



Greenwich Village contributes this Old-World doorway with the cavern entrance under its stone steps

In the neighborhood of Washington Square the artist found this former stable now converted into a home



New York's famous skyline has as many aspects as there are points of the compass; here it is seen from Brooklyn

The Woman Accused

Another Absorbing Instalment of the Novel of Mystery, in Which the Woman Turns Accuser

By Roy Vickers

Illustrations by O. J. Gatter

THE STORY FROM THE BEGINNING

JOSEPH BLENKIRON, wealthy, is found shot dead in his house. The night before he was in conference with Geoffrey Buckram, whose wife, Aileen, was Blenkiron's secretary. Blenkiron had wanted her to marry his son Quentin —had even placed her in a compromising position and obtained a photograph of her breakfasting with Quentin. At the time of her wedding, it is rumored, Quentin committed suicide. But on the night of the murder he comes to Aileen and tells her he has killed his father and fastened the crime on her husband. Aileen drives to Blenkiron's house, finds him dead and her husband unconscious. She gets Geoffrey home, bringing the contents of a safe.

Geoffrey thinks he killed Blenkiron after seeing the photograph. Aileen tells him she did it. Blenkiron's will is in favor of Aileen. In Brazier, the lawyer who comes to take her written refusal of the legacy, Aileen recognizes Quentin; this she dares not tell Geoffrey. To look for a later will, she goes on the river, where she has sunk the contents of the safe in a bag. A tramp appears on shore, and tells her he has it. Aileen gives him the jewelry and takes the papers, among which she later discovers the will, made in favor of Mrs. Fairclough, the woman who aided Blenkiron in the attack on her reputation.

Unable to give Geoffrey her confidence and still save him from suspicion, Aileen leaves home, selling an annuity to obtain cash. In a London hotel, she discovers among the Blenkiron papers canceled checks written by Blenkiron to the order of Charles Brazier, totaling £23,000, the first one written the day of her marriage. Determined to bring him to justice, Aileen goes to see Quentin, *alias* Brazier.

Telling him she quarreled with her husband, and accepting a position as his secretary, she overhears him telephoning a detective to trail her. She eludes him, returns to her hotel, and resumes examination of the papers. She discovers that, years before, Blenkiron did her father some favor, that his solicitor was Harold Brazier, and that his legacy was £23,000.

Aileen disposes of the bag, hides the papers in the lining of her coat, and goes to Brazier's office. In his absence, she secretes these in a filing-box. Mrs. Fairclough enters. Aileen agrees to give her the will in return for evidence as to the identity of Quentin Blenkiron and Brazier. Brazier himself comes in.

Aileen caught up the portable typewriter and with all her force hurled it through the window: there was a crash of broken glass

CHAPTER 27

MRS. FAIRCLOUGH, bending to the typewriter, had not heard Brazier come in. As he stood over her, hat in hand, she stifled a scream.

"How do you do, my dear Mrs. Fairclough?" he was saying. "I'm so sorry—I'm afraid I startled you."

"Oh—er—" Mrs. Fairclough laughed weakly. "I was just writing you a note. I understood that you were not expected back—"

"Until midday," supplemented Brazier. "Quite right! I had to attend a conference in Chambers, but it was over earlier than I had hoped. Will you come into the office?"

Mrs. Fairclough took the arm he offered and allowed herself to be assisted into the inner office. Brazier closed the door.

"You didn't tell me she was here!" came in a hoarse whisper from Mrs. Fairclough.

"She turned up only yesterday," replied Brazier in a careful undertone. "Besides, there was no reason to tell you; I don't know whether it has any significance. Why on earth have you come here? You haven't a ha'porth of self-control, and heaven knows what you've given away to that girl!"

"Charley—she's got the will!" whispered Mrs. Fairclough.

"I know she has," returned Brazier. "That bit about a conference in Chambers was all punk. I've

been round to her hotel. It isn't there. She's hidden it somewhere."

"She's bringing it to my rooms at six to-night," said Mrs. Fairclough. "Ah! That startled you, didn't it, Charley! The old woman isn't quite such a fool as you take her for, you know."

"She's generally most a fool when she thinks she's most clever," grunted Brazier. "That girl is an utter surprise to me—she's devilish clever and she's got any amount of stuffing. She probably saw through you."

"She did," cackled Mrs. Fairclough. "She saw quite a lot, Charley—but not quite enough. She's going to give me the will in return for my written statement that *you* are Quentin Blenkiron. He-he-hee!" In her malicious merriment the last traces of Mrs. Fairclough's gentility vanished; she looked an evil hag.

She jerked a bony finger in the direction of the outer office.

"Blenkiron's money for—Quentin Blenkiron. He-he-hee!"

"Stop that!" ordered Brazier. "What time will she be there? . . . Six. She'll have it on her person. I'll be there too. Get that landlady of yours out of the way somehow. It may come to a scuffle."

Ex Anglia

By Mabel S. Duncan

ALTHOUGH I can not tell what sturdy ship
Brought to this land my fathers' long-dead sires,
Nor with what hope of fortune she set sail,
I know that ship came from an English shore.
Setting their faces toward the unknown waste
Of spray-swept oceans, rough and icy coasts,
Those high hearts left the ordered peace of home,
The well known fields, and hedges white with may,
Content for freedom's sake to see no more
Those age-old churches in their quiet towns.
Yet they remembered, and with yearning love
To the new land they gave the old, old names.
Cambridge and Plymouth, Ipswich, Lynn, and Lyme,
Portsmouth and Haverhill and Exeter—they ring
Somewhere within my heart, so that I know
My grandsires' ship came from an English shore.

CHAPTER 28

AILEEN had watched Brazier with an almost detached interest when he came in. There had been a perfunctory greeting of herself:

"Good morning, Mrs. Westall. I'm back earlier than I expected. Ah!"

He had seen Mrs. Fairclough, evidently recognizing her though her back was toward him.

She knew that he must be aware that she herself had recognized Mrs. Fairclough. For him, she had reasoned, it was an almost impossible situation. There was the woman who had played a vital part in their lives—who could instantly identify him as Quentin Blenkiron; yet he had greeted her as if she had been an esteemed client from the country—had even covered up her hopeless inability to put up a courageous bluff.

For ten minutes she typed, and then Mrs. Fairclough came out of the inner office, nodded to her, and passed out. Aileen went on typing. Presently she looked up, to find Brazier standing over her.

"Can you manage that all right, Mrs. Westall?" he asked.

"Perfectly, thanks, Mr. Brazier."

That was all. Brazier nodded and returned to his office. Not a word about Mrs. Fairclough! Not the faintest perceptible tremor of uneasiness as to what it might mean for him, now that she was in touch with the woman who could reveal the secret of his past life.

"*You will never find Quentin Blenkiron. There is nothing left of him—not so much as a stroke of the pen.*"

As Aileen went on typing, those words beat again in her brain. There was something a little unnerving in the implicit faith Quentin placed in his own boast. Even now he was not afraid. But then, she reasoned, he did not know that Mrs. Fairclough, his accomplice, had agreed to sell him.

Shortly before one, Brazier announced his intention of going to lunch, and left the office.

Aileen finished the draft and then went to a near-by restaurant for lunch.

Over a solitary meal she tried to peer through the tangle of events and to map out a clear course for the immediate future.

She was making a bargain with Mrs. Fairclough the result of which would be to enable her to prove Brazier's real identity. For that she would sacrifice the will of Joseph Blenkiron. At first sight it seemed a very sound bargain. Superintendent Morris had said that if the will were not forthcoming in seven days there would be a hue and cry for Quentin Blenkiron.

But there would be no need for a hue and cry. She would be able to point out Quentin Blenkiron to the police.

Then again, it was one thing to prove Brazier's identity—another to prove that he had killed his father.

She was beginning to look at things as Geoffrey looked at them, she told herself. She was beginning to weigh and calculate as he did. That drove her thoughts off at a tangent. What was Geoffrey weighing at that moment? Herself, her wifehood, all that she had been to him, against what in his eyes she had become!

She caught her breath to stifle a sob. Geoffrey had believed very readily that she had killed Joseph Blenkiron. Instantly she reproved herself for an unworthy thought. Geoffrey could not help believing it—she herself had assured him that it was so.

Her pulses leaped afresh at the thought of the coming interview with Mrs. Fairclough. Whatever else eventuated,—whether Quentin Blenkiron were charged with the murder or not,—at least she would obtain proof that she had come to Geoffrey as his wife with no stain upon her soul.

"I have to go into this house to transact some legal business," Aileen explained to the commissionnaire. "It doesn't look very pleasant and I should like you to keep near at hand"

There was the still unanswered riddle of the property left by her own father—of the check totaling £23,000 drawn by Joseph Blenkiron to Charles Brazier. Her own money, perhaps! That must wait.

She would make Mrs. Fairclough write out a full account of the bungalow episode and of Quentin Blenkiron's subsequent movements. She would get the signature witnessed.

SHORTLY after her return to the office, Brazier came in and gave her something else to copy. At four o'clock, without having made any attempt to speak to her, he left the office, announcing that he would not return. She supposed that she was at liberty to do the same.

She began to tidy up the office, preparatory to leaving, when a man from the Corps of Commissionnaires brought a package for Brazier. An idea came to her. Why should not a commissionnaire be herwitness?

She asked the man the address of his office, wrote it down, and at five o'clock was engaging the services of a commissionnaire for a couple of hours.

She left the office with the commissionnaire, asked him to call a taxicab, and gave him Mrs. Fairclough's address.

The address was in Kilburn, and she had overestimated the time it would take to get there. It was a little after half-past five when the cab drew up.

"I have to go into this house to transact some legal business," she explained. "I don't know what sort of house it is,—it doesn't look very pleasant,—and I should like you to keep near at hand."

The commissionnaire smiled.

"Very good, ma'am. If there's anything you don't like, just put your head out of a window, and I'll be in in two shakes."

"Thank you so much," said Aileen. "And, by the way, I may want you to come in the house and sign a document as witness."

A tousled landlady admitted her, and, when she asked for Mrs. Fairclough, looked doubtful.

"Mrs. Fairclough said that she was expecting a young lady at six o'clock," grumbled the woman. "Mrs. Fairclough 'ersel' hasn't come back yet. P'r'aps you'd better come in her room and sit down and wait."

There were few traces of Mrs. Fairclough in the room. A portable typewriter lay open on the table, a railway guide on one side and a half-finished plate of grapes on the other.

The landlady brought her a newspaper. Aileen ran listlessly through the news, and her eye fell on the agony column:

AILEEN.—Terrible misunderstanding. Come back and let me explain. Stay where you are at present and write me that you are willing to forgive. GEOFF.

Aileen gave a little cry of astonishment as she read. It was impossible to doubt that the message was inserted by her husband. "Terrible misunderstanding"—what could he mean?

"Stay where you are at present."

He did not want her to come back, then, she reflected. What could the terrible misunderstanding be? Little more, she feared, than that Geoffrey regretted their having parted because of her refusal to explain her actions in connection with the will.

Or again, it might mean that he wanted her to come home, but warned her not to; it might mean that the police were searching for her.

One thing alone was certain: Geoffrey wanted to hear from her. She would write as soon as she had finished with Mrs Fairclough.

She looked at the clock. Twenty minutes to six.

"I could write now—and post the letter afterward," she told herself.

"Was Mr. Westall with her?" asked Geoffrey. "Are you sure?"

She looked round the room. There was the portable typewriter. She slipped a sheet into the machine:

Dear Geoffrey: If there was any misunderstanding, it was my fault. Please do not accuse yourself of ever having been harsh with me. I hope that one day we may be able to meet again in circumstances in which you will believe me when I tell you that I am desperately grateful for everything you have done for me. AILEEN.

She picked up an envelope and addressed it on the typewriter. She took a stamp from her purse and stamped it and slipped the letter into her blouse.

A moment later Mrs. Fairclough entered with Brazier. Aileen stiffened; she said coldly:

"I didn't know that I was to have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Brazier in your rooms, Mrs. Fairclough."

Mrs. Fairclough shrank away into the corner. Brazier came confidently forward.

"A little bit clumsy of you, my dear!" he said, for the first time dropping his pose. "Also a little uncomplimentary! I have never lied to you, Aileen. Why did you not believe me when I told you that you could never find Quentin Blenkiron? To-night I think it was your intention to recreate him with—a stroke of the pen?"

"Do you really think I can not prove I have found Quentin Blenkiron?" flashed Aileen.

"We will not argue the point," said Brazier. "My interest, I confess, is concentrated on the will. By all the laws of probability, you have it on your person. It is not your will, my dear,—it is Mrs. Fairclough's,—and I must ask you to hand it to her."

"Do you intend to try to take it by force?" challenged Aileen.

"I think that will be unnecessary," replied Brazier.

He produced a paper from his pocket.

"Perhaps you would like to run your eye over—that paragraph."

Aileen snatched the paper from his hands.

[*Continued on page 108*]

The Car for the Girl in Business

The modern business woman needs her own personal transportation medium. It saves time and increases her efficiency and earning power. Yet, because she is a woman, she also insists that her car shall measure up to a high standard of quality.

The Chevrolet Utility Coupé with Fisher Body, refined gray cloth upholstery, plate glass windows, Turnstedt window regulators, and other artistic fittings, streamlines and riding comfort, fully meets her quality requirements. Its mechanical efficiency and ease of handling make strong appeal, and finally its surprisingly low price and lowest per mile cost decide her choice.

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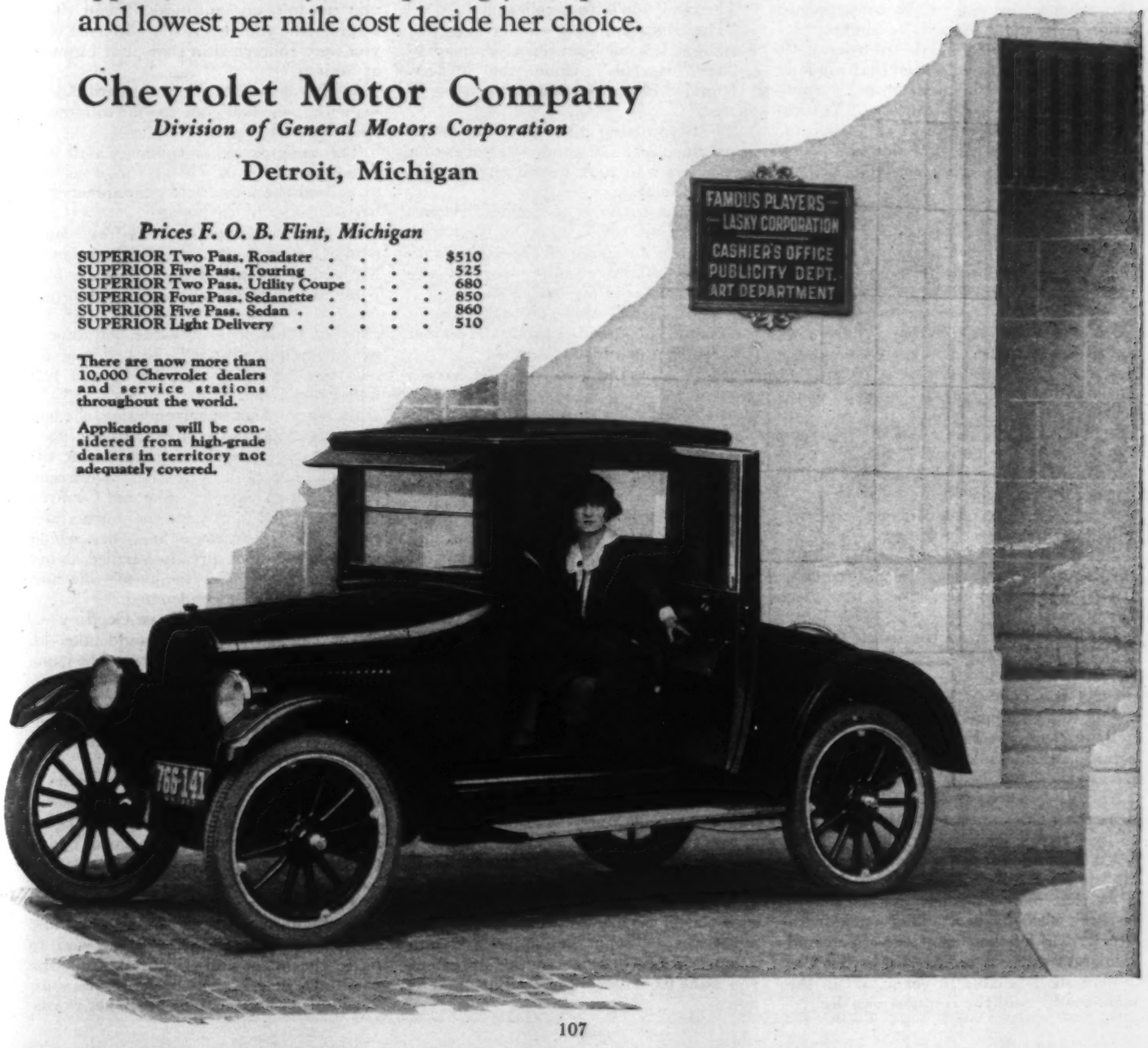

The Woman Accused

[*Continued from page 106*]

WANTED BY THE POLICE!

Any one having information as to the whereabouts of Mrs. Aileen Buckram, wife of Geoffrey Buckram of "The Cedars," Rubington, Middlesex, should communicate the same instantly to the nearest police station. The following is a description—

Aileen lowered the paper as she felt Brazier's eye upon her.

"Are you going to hand me that will, or am I going to call the police?" he asked.

"You can call the police," Aileen answered firmly.

"There is a third way out of the difficulty," said Brazier. And before she realized it his arm was around her waist and his hand searching her dress. She wriggled and broke free.

"Ah! It's there! I heard it crackle," said Brazier to Mrs. Fairclough.

"Be careful!" came in a groan from Mrs. Fairclough.

Aileen kept her head. She must get to the window and call to the commissionnaire. She edged toward the window.

"Don't be silly," said Brazier. "I sha'n't give you time to open that window and shout for help. Believe me, I want to avoid any unpleasantness. You've only to hand me that will and you can leave the house. If you don't, I shall simply have to take it by force."

AILEEN was standing by the table. With one hand she gripped the ironwork of the portable typewriter.

"Take it by force—if you can!" she muttered through clenched teeth.

Brazier gripped her right shoulder. With her left hand Aileen caught the portable typewriter, swung backward, and hurled it with all her force at the

There was a crash of broken glass, window.

mingling with the clatter of the portable typewriter as it fell into the area.

"Good Lord!" gasped Brazier. "Still a darling little virago—"

He broke off as there came a heavy thudding upon the outer door.

"Probably the police," said Brazier, turning to the cowering Mrs. Fairclough. "We'd better open the door. I shall give her in charge."

He himself went to the door. Aileen followed him closely.

"Help me out!" she called, as Brazier opened the door. "This man has been trying to assault me."

Before the commissionnaire could take action, Brazier stood aside and let her pass out.

"Shall I fetch the police, ma'am?" demanded the commissionnaire.

"No, thank you," said Aileen.

"Well, more's the pity, ma'am, that's all."

At that moment Aileen felt herself to be very clear-headed. The scuffle with Brazier had left her unruffled. She could think only of the frustration of her plan.

"We shall be able to get a taxi in the main road," said the commissionnaire.

"Yes," said Aileen. "Oh, there is a pillar box. Will you post this letter, please?"

She gave him the letter she had written to Geoffrey. It was she who stopped a taxicab at the corner. The commissionnaire was by her side.

"Thank you very much indeed for your help," said Aileen, and slipped a pound note into the hand of the commissionnaire. "Tell him to drive to Scotland Yard, please."

She had seen in a flash that this was now the only safe course. Her intuition warned her that, though her blow against her enemy had failed, she might yet succeed if she were to take the initiative and strike again quickly—and this time the weapon would be her own safety.

FIFTEEN minutes later Aileen was speaking to a reception clerk at New Scotland Yard.

"I have called about the police advertisement in this evening's paper for Mrs. Buckram," she explained.

The clerk spoke to a colleague:

"The Buckram case—advertised this evening. It's not been reported, has it?"

"Yes, it has," came the answer. "Detective-Inspector Robertson is in charge."

"Will you step this way, madam?" asked the clerk, and handed her over to a messenger, who took her to an office on the third floor.

A thick-set man in the middle thirties rose as she entered.

"You are in charge of the—the Buckram case—in this evening's paper?" she asked, a tremor in her voice.

"Yes, madam. Will you take a seat?"

"Thank you," said Aileen. "I—I am Mrs. Buckram, and I—"

"Stop," said the detective. "I have a warrant for your arrest, Mrs. Buckram, and it is my duty to warn you that anything you say will be used in evidence against you."

"Thank you," said Aileen, with a calm dignity that won the detective's respect; "but I am willing to make a full statement. I was the woman in the punt, and the story of that tramp whom you arrested is partly true. But I had no hand in killing Mr. Blenkiron. I am going to give you information that will lead you to the real murderer—to Quentin Blenkiron, the murdered man's son."

At these words there was a change in the manner of the detective. He drew down the corners of his mouth and in his eye was that which might have been a wink.

"You don't know much about the Yard, Mrs. Buckram. You swung that tale on Superintendent Morris of Rubington, but it won't work here."

"What do you mean?" gasped Aileen.

"You know well enough what I mean," answered the detective. "There's no such person as Quentin Blenkiron. There never was. Joseph Blenkiron never had a son. Now—what about the statement you want to make? I'm ready to take it down."

CHAPTER 29

AS Detective-Inspector Robertson told her that Quentin Blenkiron did not exist, that he never had existed, Aileen Buckram felt panic seize her. She saw the detective as through a mist. The walls of that little office in Scotland Yard seemed to be spinning round in an ever-contracting circle that would presently crush her.

She had blundered into a trap. Her plan in coming to Scotland Yard and giving herself up was based on the assumption that the police were searching for Quentin Blenkiron and would accept any help she could give him. In the tortured confusion of her brain one thought alone stood clear—that the police had no intention, whatever she might say, of embarking upon what they regarded as a wild-goose chase for Quentin Blenkiron—for a man they believed never to have existed.

"Well—what about the statement?" the detective was asking. "Of course, you needn't say anything if you don't want. But you've already admitted that you were concerned in that punt business at Staines."

In that moment of deadly peril Aileen knew that she had gone too far to retreat. And upon what path?

The panic passed as suddenly as it had come—passed into a cold horror as she visualized the immediate consequences of her surrender to the police.

In to-morrow's papers Geoffrey would read of her surrender. Though he believed her guilty, he would not allow a single point to go against her that he could prevent. He would immediately tell his story of the whisky and the parradine—would undoubtedly tell the police of his own first suspicion that he himself had killed Blenkiron.

By her mad act in surrendering, she had virtually dragged Geoffrey into the dock beside her. The whole sacrifice that she had made so proudly for her love would be brought to ridicule. She and Geoffrey would be tried jointly for the murder and robbery of Blenkiron—the police would laugh as they had already laughed at her mention of Quentin Blenkiron—she and Geoffrey would be condemned.

Not if a lie could yet save Geoffrey—a clever, calculated lie that would take the force from Geoffrey's truth when he came to tell it.

"Well, I see you don't want to make a statement at all," said Detective-Inspector Robertson, and reached for the house telephone.

"I do," she jerked. "Just give me a moment to collect my thoughts, please."

She was collecting her thoughts at lightning speed. It would be no good trying to suppress anything that had actually happened. It would be impossible to conceal the fact that Geoffrey was at the house in an unconscious state. She must use the unconsciousness. If she were to lie to the bitter end, Geoffrey, from the very fact that he *had* been unconscious, would never be able to disprove her words.

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She sighed, almost with a sense of relief.

"What are you charging me with?" she asked, with a coolness that startled the detective.

"You are charged with being an accessory with a person or persons unknown in the murder of Joseph Blenkiron, and further with robbing the safe belonging to the said Joseph Blenkiron," answered the detective.

"What is my motive supposed to be?" asked Aileen.

"That's not my affair. The public prosecutor looks after that. This sort of thing isn't a statement, you know—asking me questions."

"Also, you must be rather puzzled as to why I came here of my own accord—walked into the lion's den, as it were," continued Aileen.

She still wanted a little time, and she did not care how she obtained it. Confidence was coming to her. All fear of the detective had left her. The vast power of which he was but the instrument would overwhelm her and crush her—but while she was being crushed she would laugh at its impotence to harm the object of her love.

By subtlety, lies, finesse, perjury if necessary, she would snatch the husband whose memory she adored from the jaws of the implacable monster that the law had now become to them.

"Suppose we begin with my motive," resumed Aileen. "I killed Joseph Blenkiron in order that I might prevent him from telling my husband a secret about my past. I robbed his safe—partly to get that evidence, and partly to make you think that an ordinary burglary had taken place. And I've surrendered to-night because I had calculated that you would almost certainly arrest my husband, who is innocent. Don't make notes now, please. You can write it out when I have finished, and I will sign it."

The detective looked almost alarmed.

"That amounts to a plea of guilty, you know," he said doubtfully. "Your lawyers will advise you to withdraw it. You understand, it's my duty to repeat everything you tell me."

"It's very kind of you," said Aileen, "but I quite recognize that. I know you feel it as an unpleasant duty, but it need not be. I'm going to tell you everything.

"I shall not go into every little detail now," she continued. "It began with Mr. Joseph Blenkiron meeting me on the previous day, and saying that on the next night he was going to tell my husband. He—he was going to show him a photograph of myself breakfasting on a bungalow veranda with another man—whom I had known before my marriage. The object of the photograph was to make my husband think that I ought to have confessed about this man before I married him—but it was a trick. Never mind.

"I was ready to take any risk to preserve my married happiness. So I decided, quite coolly, that I would kill Mr. Blenkiron. I knew his household pretty well, as I had been secretary to him before he came to London. I knew the cook had a mother at Reading—so I sent a telegram from there to decoy her away. In the afternoon I went to Mr. Blenkiron's house, disguised as a servant who wanted a place with a rich master. While I was talking to the butler I drugged his tea—quite mildly—and then I put more in his beer."

"What drug did you use?"

"I don't know," said Aileen. "It was a sleeping draught."

"Where was his beer?"

"It's no use going into the details, Inspector. You'd better let me tell my story in my own way."

The detective pursed his lips.

"All right. Go ahead, then!"

"My husband came home at the usual time, and we had dinner together. I knew that presently the telephone bell would ring to summon him to Mr. Blenkiron, with whom he was doing a good deal of legal work. I remember I went to the piano and played to him. Then the telephone rang, exactly as I had anticipated.

"Now, my husband suffers very badly from neuralgia. He had an attack that night. He took his ordinary dose of parradine—as he thought: really he took double the quantity. He set off for Mr. Blenkiron's house a little after nine. Before he went out he took his revolver from the drawer and put it in his pocket. He was a little bit muzzy with the drug—and as I said good night to him I slipped the revolver from his coat."

Aileen paused. Geoffrey would state that he had taken parradine. He would state that he had put his revolver in his pocket. All this would tally.

"I can't remember the time, but I gave him about three quarters of an hour or an hour. Then I took the revolver, jumped into my car, and drove to Mr. Blenkiron's house."

AGAIN Aileen paused. It might seem a little unconvincing if she were to say that she found her husband unconscious at just the right moment. She would have to throw a little dust in the detective's eyes first. Chicanery—but in the service of her love!

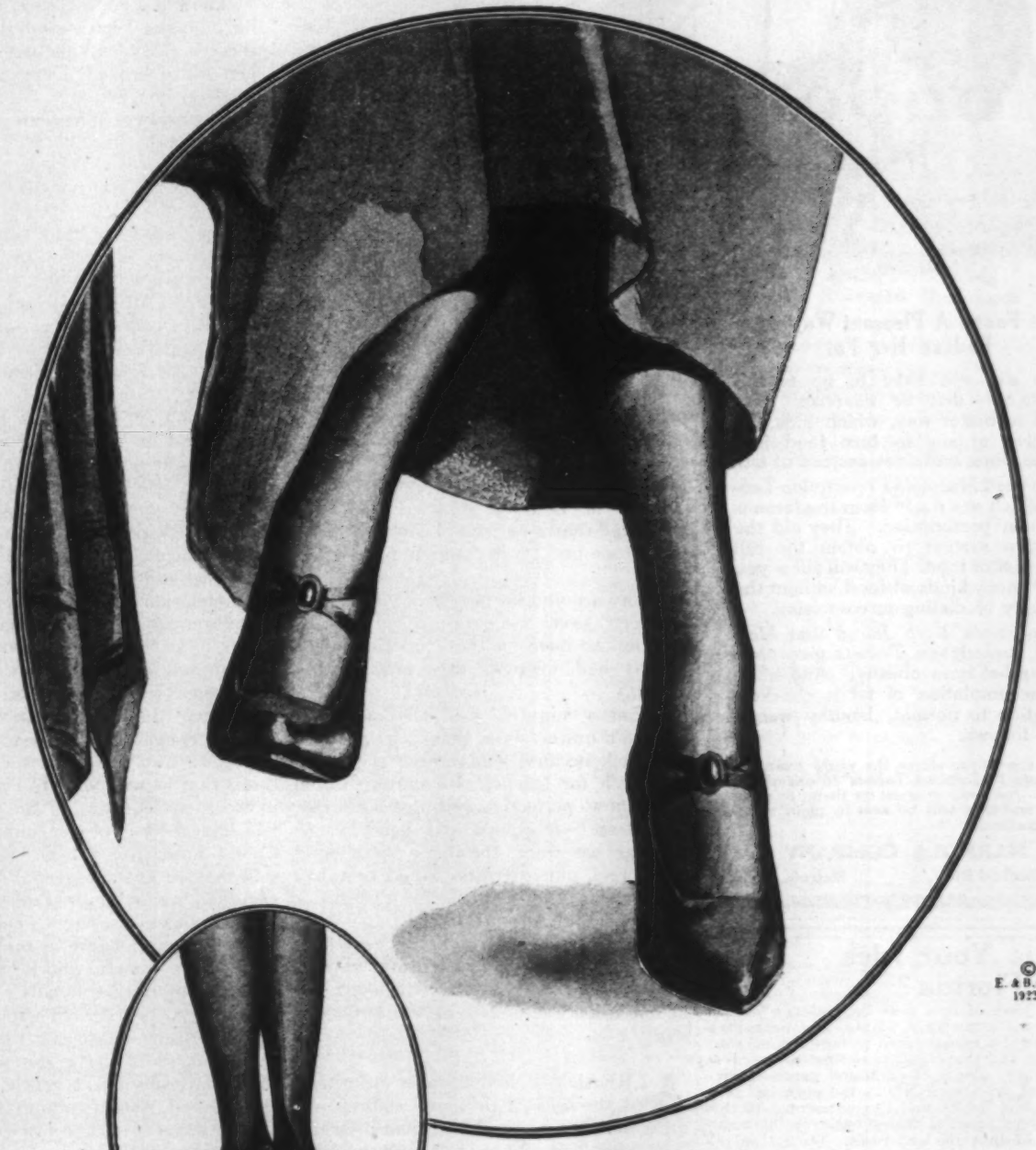
"It was the first time I had ever set myself to crime, Inspector, and I had the beginner's luck. Whisky, as you may know, taken on top of parradine, has a very violent ill effect. I intended to cut into the conversation between my husband and Mr. Blenkiron and contrive somehow to get my husband to drink whisky. As a matter of fact, he had evidently already taken some, for when I looked through the French windows, he was lying prone—unconscious—and Mr. Blenkiron was bending over him."

It was easy going from that point onward. She gave Detective-Inspector Robertson the version of the affair that she had given Geoffrey himself—that Blenkiron had threatened to reveal the secret as soon as Geoffrey recovered consciousness, that she had shot him, taken Geoffrey to the car and smuggled him home, having previously robbed the safe.

Thereafter she kept to the facts. She even admitted that she had told Geoffrey, knowing that thereby she would do him no harm, as the law does not compel a husband to hand his wife over to justice.

"Why did you tell your husband at all?"

"I never meant to, Inspector," said Aileen; "but, you see, he remembered taking his revolver with him, and he actually thought that he himself had killed Blenkiron in a state of semi-drunkenness caused by the whisky acting



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on the parradine. He was going to give himself up; so I immediately confessed to him."

"What did he do?"

"He exercised the right the law gives him of not giving me up. He didn't know that I had also burgled the safe until the evening, when it came out somehow. Then he said that he would go on protecting me, but no one else must be injured; I must return Blenkiron's papers anonymously at once. The only reason I hadn't done so, of course, was that I had not had time to go through them—I didn't know what might be among them that concerned me. I went down to Staines the next day, and—you know what happened there; I didn't give the tramp that jewelry. He insisted on opening the box before he handed it back to me, and—he simply took it. I couldn't prevent him."

"Where are those papers now?"

"In a deed-box labeled H. A. L. DOUCESTER in the office of Mr. Charles Brazier in Bedford Row. Except the will—and that is on me. I can't give it to you now—but I will hand it to a wardress."

"Why are you keeping it on you?"

Aileen gave the true reason, taking care not to mention that Superintendent Morris had unconsciously inspired her action.

"Wait a minute," said the inspector. "I don't quite follow that you kept the will back because you wanted the police to search for Quentin Blenkiron—whom you know perfectly well doesn't exist. Oh, I see!—it was a red herring. As long as we went chasing a man we'd never find, our attention would be taken off you?"

"Yes," said Aileen dully.

What was the use of saying anything else? If she had given a truthful answer, the detective would not have believed it—he might have refused to believe her whole story.

ALREADY it had become clear that if she wished to save Geoffrey she must make no mention of Quentin Blenkiron. She had told her tale, and she must stick to it in every particular.

"Is that all that you have to say?" asked the inspector, after a short pause.

"I have told you everything of importance," answered Aileen. "If you like, I will write out a statement myself. I have plenty of money with me and I want to buy a typewriter—I shall have a lot of writing to do and it will help my lawyer. I'm allowed to buy things, am I not?"

"Yes—another officer will deal with that," said the detective. "I myself shall write out all that you have told me and ask you to sign it," he added. "You need not sign it if you don't want to."

"Thank you very much," said Aileen. "I wonder why people say the police are harsh?"

She had the distinct impression that the detective was ill at ease.

"Look here, Mrs. Buckram; I'm going to step outside my duty," he said, in a voice little above a whisper. "We don't like a confession in a murder case: the public prosecutor doesn't like it. We'd much rather find the proof ourselves, in case of accidents. I strongly advise you not to sign that confession. I shall use all you've said, mind, and work it up—but I advise you not to stick to it."

"I know it's good advice," said Aileen. "But, you see, I have no desire to escape, Inspector. My—my life is over, and I—"

Her voice broke. Detective-Inspector Robertson coughed.

"I'm afraid you'll have to go to the cells now," he said.

CHAPTER 30

IN the long night that followed Superintendent Morris's visit, Geoffrey Buckram passed through a good man's purgatory. All his conceptions of everything were sent spinning into absurdity by the superintendent's revelation that Quentin Blenkiron had not committed suicide.

His mind, unmethodical for once, reconstructed in a flash the whole of the strange scene between Aileen and himself on the day following the murder.

She had begun by saying positively that Quentin Blenkiron was the murderer. He had ridiculed her; had made it impossible for her to go on. Then he had come to the conclusion that he himself had killed Blenkiron, goaded to the crime by her deception of him. He had been about to give himself up to the police—and Aileen had taken the only course that could have been counted upon to deter him.

Love, reawakened and leaping into new life, gave him insight. Aileen had reasoned that he was going to his doom as an indirect consequence of an act of hers. She had chosen to save him at her own peril. Thereafter the lie, dictated by a selfless love that staggered his imagination, had bred a hundred others.

A wave of self-pity engulfed him. What a pitiable figure he must cut in the eyes of the woman who loved him more than life, more than honor! How readily he had believed her self-accusation, never pausing to reflect that any mad mischance should have been more credible than that Aileen, the gentle, the tender, the beloved, should commit a foul crime.

On the next day he inserted his advertisement in the agony column of every evening paper that would take it, and passed another sleepless night, wondering whether it had caught her eye.

His joy on the following morning when he received her note was intense. As he read it his happiness was tempered by the restraint of her message. It was a cold and almost formal note, he told himself. But had he not richly deserved it? Had he not, rather, deserved that she should never speak or write again to him who had proved that his love lacked the quality of faith?

He placed the note reverently in his dressing-gown. On the way to the bathroom he ran downstairs and picked up the morning paper.

In the paper he read of Aileen's surrender to the police.

At ten o'clock Geoffrey Buckram was at New Scotland Yard, but was refused permission to see Aileen. He protested indignantly, and was told that he might see her on the following day if the prisoner herself expressed a desire for the interview.

His knowledge both of police methods

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and of the law warned him that he would merely make himself ridiculous by attempting any statement at that stage. He went to his office, and throughout the working day attended to the urgent trifles of his business, while his mind was turning over and over every aspect of his problem.

In the train on his way back to Rubington he decided that he would write a full statement of the case and send it to the public prosecutor; but by the time he had reached his house he had resolved that he would hold up the statement until a day or so before the trial. In the meantime he would do all that was humanly possible to find Quentin Blenkiron.

He would supplement the efforts of the official police by employing the best private detectives in the country. Quentin Blenkiron had pretended to commit suicide. He was in hiding. Experience had shown him that in modern civilization it was next to impossible for a man completely to cover his tracks. He would search, and the police would search. In the meantime, Aileen must languish in police custody.

From sheer force of habit, he washed and smartened himself up for the dinner that he knew he would be unable to eat.

As he went downstairs, Aston, the maid, was coming up:

"There's another detective, sir—Detective-Inspector Robertson of New Scotland Yard. I've put him in the morning-room."

"Right, thanks!" said Geoffrey.

He had become conscious of a change in the servants' manner toward him. He had a shrewd suspicion that before they went to bed that night they would all give him notice.

"GOOD evening, Mr. Robertson. Sit down, will you, and tell me what I can do for you?"

"Thank you," said the detective. There was a short pause, and then:

"You were at the Yard this morning, Mr. Buckram. You know what has happened. I've come to know if you have any statement you would like to make to us."

For a moment Geoffrey was silent.

"You will realize, Inspector, that I have no intention of saying or doing anything to the detriment of my wife."

"Quite so! If you've no wish to discuss it at all, I'll go. As you know, we have no power to demand an answer to our questions—outside a court. But as for doing your wife any harm, that's quite impossible, Mr. Buckram. She has confessed. Against the advice of the police, she has pleaded guilty, and given the full circumstances of her crime."

"Good heavens!" gasped Geoffrey. "Do you mean to say you believe her confession? She made that confession as a pious trick, to save me! I'll make a statement fast enough, Inspector. Just listen."

In an angry torrent of words, Geoffrey poured out a full and accurate account of all that had happened.

He paused as he finished his account, and stared at the stolid face of the detective.

"You have confirmed Mrs. Buckram's statement in every particular but one—and that a small one," said the detective, to Geoffrey's amazement. "When you left the house, a double dose of the drug was on you, and—you didn't notice it, but your wife slipped the revolver out of your coat."

"But it was in my coat on the following morning."

"Doubtless she put it back. She would have had plenty of time to do so."

"But this is fantastic!" cried Geoffrey. "Can't you see—" He pulled himself up. "Did she tell you anything about the photograph?" he asked.

"She said she knew there was a photograph and possibly other proof among Blenkiron's papers."

"Wait a minute, Inspector," said Geoffrey. "I'll give you a bit of real evidence to be going on with."

He went to the desk in the next room, unlocked a drawer, and took from it the photograph of Aileen and the man she had described as Quentin Blenkiron sitting together on the veranda of a bungalow.

"There you are, Inspector!" said Geoffrey. "That photograph was in my hand when she brought me away from the house. I found it on the floor by my bed in the morning. Look—you can see it's my wife, though some ink or something has been spilled on it, and it's crushed under the grip of my hand."

"What do you suggest this proves?" asked the detective.

"It doesn't prove anything," replied Geoffrey; "but it suggests that Blenkiron gave it to me before I was unconscious—and that I myself shot him in anger."

The detective shrugged his shoulders.

"You might have," he said; "but you know more about evidence than I do, and you know that against Mrs. Buckram's confession that she had your revolver—well, the jury would simply think it a chivalrous effort on your part."

The detective slipped the photograph into his pocket.

Geoffrey saw that he had made no progress.

"Have you found Quentin Blenkiron?" he demanded.

The detective drew down the corners of his mouth.

"We've found that there is no such person as Quentin Blenkiron, and that there never has been."

Geoffrey drew a deep breath.

"Nonsense!" he gasped. "How do you know that?"

"Somerset House," answered the detective drily.

Geoffrey thought for a moment.

"The fact that a birth isn't registered at Somerset House doesn't mean that a birth has not taken place," he flung at the detective. "It's still possible that Blenkiron had a son—unregistered."

"Y-yes—yes—it's possible," said the detective. "Almost anything is possible, if you look at it that way."

"I understand," snapped Geoffrey. "You mean that you are not going to investigate that line. Well, I am."

"That won't do anybody any harm," said the detective equably, "and I'm sure I hope that good may come of it. May I ask you, Mr. Buckram, whether you have a typewriter in this house?"

"Why do you want to know that?"

"I'm not at liberty to tell you. You can't possibly make her position worse," added the detective. "You might make it better."

"Pah! What you really mean is that if I attempt to block your investigations you will immediately get a search warrant," exclaimed Geoffrey, and added, more courteously: "I'm sorry, Mr. Robertson. I've no desire to be unpleasant to you personally, but—I'm in a pretty awful position. I'll answer your question. There is, to the best of my belief, a typewriter—in the lumber-room. If you'd like to come up with me, I'll dig it out."

"Thanks very much," said the detective. "I'm glad you look at it like that, Mr. Buckram. I think you realize that it doesn't do the police any good to work up a case against a person and have it broken down in cross-examination. Apart from our natural feelings, we get a lot more credit when our investigations clear a person who seems to be guilty than when we get a conviction."

Geoffrey nodded and led the way to the lumber-room. After some rummaging he found an old typewriter that Aileen had used before her marriage.

"We'd better take it downstairs," he said, and carried it. "Phew! It's pretty dusty!"

BACK in the morning-room, the detective slipped a sheet into the typewriter, tapped the keys a dozen or so times, slipped the paper out, and, with his back to Geoffrey, compared it with a paper he took from his pocket.

"Thanks!" he said. "I've finished with the typewriter. There's just one thing more before I go."

"Well?"

"Have you received any communication from Mrs. Buckram since she left you?"

There was truth in the detective's words, reflected Geoffrey. He could not make her position worse—he might make it better.

"Yes," he answered, and told the detective about his agony advertisement and the reply.

"Was the letter written or typed?"

"Typed," answered Geoffrey.

"Will you let me see it, please?"

The lawyer's brain was able to see that if he refused and destroyed the letter, it would be a point against the prisoner: it would argue that he had been afraid to show the letter. And the letter itself told nothing.

"I'll get it for you," he said. "It's in my dressing-gown pocket."

The detective took the letter and compared it with a paper of his own.

"May I keep this letter?" he asked.

"Perhaps—if you'll tell me why you want it."

For a moment Detective-Inspector Robertson studied the other man sternly.

"I'll risk getting into trouble to show you that I've no intention of bluffing you," he said deliberately. "This letter, written to you last night, was written on the same machine as that on which the telegram was sent from Reading decoying the cook from the dead man's house."

Geoffrey dropped into a chair as if he had been struck.

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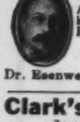

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"Do you still believe in your wife's innocence, Mr. Buckram?"

"Yes; I—"

"Stop right there!" broke in the detective. "You still believe in your wife's innocence. Well, if you refuse to let me take this letter, the jury won't believe that you believe in her innocence."

Geoffrey's head dropped into his hands.

"The old game!" he moaned, his agony driving him to injustice. "Your one interest is to work up a case against the prisoner. I'll break your case, Inspector. Take that letter—take everything you like. Come here and ransack the place, and never worry about a search warrant. I'm going to bet my life and hers that I'll find Quentin Blenkiron and prove that he is the murderer."

"Good night, Mr. Buckram," said the detective. "You may not believe me—but I'm really sorry for you."

CHAPTER 31

THE detective had gone. For several minutes Geoffrey lay back in the chair, as if he had been crushed by this last catastrophe.

Things had gone beyond his power of analyzing them. There was a welter of clues and false scents and distorting incidents. With the agony gnawing at his heart, he could not bring a clear, unbalanced judgment to sift the dangerous from the trivial.

Suddenly an idea flashed to him. That night Aileen had first met Brazier! She had been upset by his resemblance to Quentin Blenkiron. And Brazier himself had admitted the resemblance, and had added that he had more than once found himself in an embarrassing situation.

Brazier would know something about the man who was supposed to be his double—he had been embarrassed by the fact.

His course was clear. He would go at once to Brazier. Brazier was a good sort. He would lay all the facts before him, seek his advice professionally, and together they would search for Brazier's double.

He knew Brazier's private address. In his automobile he could get there in twenty minutes or so.

Twenty minutes later he was knocking at Brazier's front door. He was kept waiting in the hall for several minutes, and was then shown into a room that was more like an office than a sitting-room.

Brazier received him with bowed head.

"I know why you've come, Buckram," he said in a quavering voice. "If you've determined to shoot me—I sha'n't offer resistance. I deserve it."

Geoffrey stared in open-mouthed amazement.

"Why the devil should I want to shoot you?" he demanded. "I haven't the faintest notion what you're talking about!" Then, as there came a sudden explanation:

"*Are* you Quentin Blenkiron? Do you admit it?"

"I am—in a sense," answered Brazier.

"What do you mean by 'in a sense'? cried Geoffrey. "You are or you are not. And if you are, you murdered your father."

Brazier burst into laughter.

"My *dear* fellow!" he exclaimed lightly.

"Speak!" commanded Geoffrey.

"I see I shall have to," said Brazier. "I've gone too far to retreat. I thought you knew everything, and apparently you know nothing. There never was a Quentin Blenkiron, Buckram. But—before your marriage—Aileen and I—Well, there's no need to put it crudely into words. If you want to shoot, the unwritten law will get you off all right. Too many people got to know about it, and—we put up the tale of a son for Blenkiron—innocent flirtation and all that. Blenkiron thought a lot of the girl and was ready to help her. He didn't want to prevent her from being married, and—we had to get rid of the son somehow, so we decided to let him commit suicide of a broken heart or something."

"That photograph at the bungalow—it was you?"

Brazier hung his head still lower.

"If it were any good to Aileen to deny it, I should," said Brazier. "But it isn't."

"I don't believe you!" cried Geoffrey. "By heaven, you shall prove those words to me, or I'll kill you!"

"Very well!" said Brazier indifferently. "You can come with me now to the Gulverbury Hotel in Bloomsbury. They will identify me as Mr. Westall—the husband of Mrs. Westall. I can further prove—or the police will do it for you—that Aileen has been with me since she left you—under the name of Mrs. Westall."

CHAPTER 32

GEOFFREY BUCKRAM felt his muscles tauten as the hot blood of anger mounted to his head. For a moment he thought that he was about to fling himself upon Brazier. Then he became suddenly cool—it was as if his anger had crystallized.

"Let me understand you clearly, Mr. Brazier," he said with ominous calm. "You have volunteered the statement that you were my wife's lover before her marriage to me. You have further volunteered that since leaving me she has returned to you. If it is true—I have nothing to say to you. If it is true—you have merely played the cad. If it is untrue—if for some purpose of your own you have perpetrated a foul slander against an innocent woman—then, Mr. Brazier, I think I shall kill you."

Brazier did not blanch.

"I ask nothing fairer than that," he said, with a bow. 'And I will not offer anything in the nature of an apology—'

"Will you allow me to use your telephone, Mr. Brazier?" said Geoffrey, with icy politeness. "I think you said—the Gulverbury Hotel."

"Bloomsbury 1093," said Brazier.

A couple of minutes later Geoffrey was speaking to the manager of the hotel.

"You had a Mrs. Westall staying with you recently. . . . Yes, that is right, she was arrested. Was Mr. Westall with her? . . . What! Are you quite sure? It is rather important. . . . Yes, I'll wait. . . .

"They say, Mr. Brazier, that Mr. Westall was not there," said Geoffrey, the receiver still to his ear. He started as a voice came again on the telephone.

"Hullo—yes? . . . On Tuesday morning. Went up to Mrs. Westall's room? Was Mrs. Westall there? . . . Right! Thank you very much. Good-by."

Geoffrey replaced the receiver and stood for a moment, irresolute.

"Well?" demanded Brazier.

"What the manager told me proves nothing," said Geoffrey. "He said that Mr. Westall went to Mrs. Westall's room on Tuesday morning."

"I didn't say that we had stayed there," said Brazier patiently. "I said that they would identify me as Mr. Westall. I'm ready to come with you for that purpose, if you like. I told you that she had been with me at my office. She came to me for companionship. Our plans, in any case, were uncertain."

"Nothing has been proved," said Geoffrey, half to himself.

"And nothing has been disproved," said Brazier. He lighted a cigarette. "Look here, Buckram, I don't understand your attitude. I made a confession to you, and on the strength of that you're—entitled to take your change out of me. But what's at the back of your mind? The suspicion that I am lying about the whole thing. Good heavens! Did you ever know a man in your life—or hear of one—who made a lying confession to a husband, running the risk of being shot or having his jaw broken?"

"I think you understand my attitude very well," said Geoffrey. "If you do not, I shall lose nothing by making it plain. I believe that you are Quentin Blenkiron."

"Well, I recommend you to pay a shilling fee at Somerset House—"

"There are probably thousands of persons alive whose parents forgot or refused to register them," returned Geoffrey.

"Well, my dear fellow, I'm sure I can't see how to help you," said Brazier indifferently. "If there was a Quentin Blenkiron and if I am Quentin Blenkiron, it's surely easy enough to prove. Blenkiron was in Manchester before he came to London. He had a fair-sized house there, with servants. You've only got to get hold of those servants and parade them in front of me, and they'll identify me—if I am Quentin Blenkiron. It's sheer nonsense to pretend that after two years or so the servants wouldn't know the son of the house. However secluded a life Blenkiron may have led, you can't live in a place without dozens of people knowing you, at least by sight."

"That is precisely what I intend to do," said Geoffrey. "By this time to-morrow night I shall know for certain whether there is, or ever has been, a Quentin Blenkiron—and, believe me, it will only be a few hours later before I shall know whether you are he."

Brazier nodded.

"Quite so! Just as you say." He spoke as one humoring an eccentric. With a half smile on his face, he watched Geoffrey leave the room, and as the latter's back was turned blew a puff of cigarette smoke after him.

[To be concluded]

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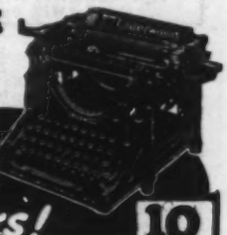

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Eleanore the Second-Hand

[*Continued from page 39*]

"And as for the nights and nights you've burned up your charm listening to her love affairs—her affair with Saxe Bunner—"

"Why, Kit!"

"Yes, till you never showed up at the agencies till noon next day!—well, all I have to say, Eleanore Boone, is that if she's any friend of yours, she owes you something more than a few second-hand clothes. She owes you *Muggsy!*" said Kitty Clover. "She owes you, at least, her influence for *Muggsy!*"

The clock chimed, and struck one. Dazed, Eleanore watched Kitty swing into her black satin cape.

"And now, Miss Boone," Kitty Clover was saying, flouncing back her fiery, straggling red hair, "all I want from you is the Paris cable address, if you please, of Miss Blanche—Isabel—Dare!"

And Kitty Clover smiled. It was the smile that comes only upon the faces of little, determined women. And it was that smile (like the smile of Alice's Cheshire Cat, remaining long after she had gone) which sustained the Original *Muggsy* through the ensuing days. It was the smile that makes things happen.

AND it wasn't very long before something did happen. Nothing to be alarmed at, though—just one of those every-day theatrical enigmas, it was—one of those sudden, mystifying, heart-breaking changes of cast which the Broadway Rialto usually dismisses with "Oh Lord, little girl, don't ask *me* about anything in *this* profession! Why, I've only been on the stage twenty years!"

One of those exasperating, inexplicable dismissals which impels Mrs. Chillicothe, Ills., to stop a dejected mother at the butcher's with a half-delighted frown. "Well, what's happened to your daughter down there to New York? Hear she's lost the part. Strange—we all here thought she had so much talent—picture in the paper here and ever'thing."

Now, it may have been that the actress who was rehearsing the part of *Muggsy* had really failed to make good. She may have been rushed off to the hospital with an appendix. You never can tell. Had the star, possibly, decided (after a talk with his wife) that she was too tall for the part? Too short? You never can tell!

To the Original *Muggsy*, however, the case was simple. While Kit had, of course, been awfully dear, don't you know, and influence did help sometimes, still she was serenely confident that, sooner or later, Saxe Bunner would have to send for the creator of so artistic a rôle.

And, sure enough, one smiling September morning the gossipy, the newspaper-reading members of the "Red Lights" company did watch, in that famous second-act opium-den scene, the fumes from a corncob pipe proclaiming the renascence of the Original *Muggsy the Dope*.

And then—oh, I hate to tell you, but then, you know El—it was, oh, less than a week, it was, she'd been rehearsing—when the happy Original happened to be half-seated on a pile of rugs, back-stage, talking to a stage-hand. Morose, dried-up old fellow, he was, skin toughened by thousands of performances. He had been telling her that, "Well, I've seen a lot of 'em, but, b'gosh, they's sure somethin' about yer, girlie, that yer just got ter look at yer again—an' then, b'gosh, if yer don't look again!" And Eleanore had been saying something that elicited, through his pounding, pounding, a periodic "Yer don't say! . . . Well, well! . . . Yer don't say—Original one, eh? . . . Well, well! Yer don't—" when, startlingly, they were interrupted by the banging of the stage-door.

Eleanore looked round. And the very next instant, Vanne Burke, grinning-radiant, was extending her warmest, just-back-to-town handshake. And after explaining how you could have knocked her down with a powder-puff when Mooney sent her over here for a part in this show, and who ever dreamed they'd be sharing upper berths together this season, Vanne Burke pulled the Original aside with the inevitable "Oh, say, El, heard the news?"

Her voice sank to a whisper: "Say—Fritz Perkins's wife is dead! Only just back from Atlantic City, they were, two days. Sign on his office door this morning. Poor old Fritzo! Why, I heard—" And then, abruptly, in response to the stage-manager's summons, Vanne blithely strode across the stage.

In progress now was the second act. And soon, so engrossed in her new rôle had the rather nervous Miss Burke become that apparently she had not heard a stentorian voice off-stage which had been calling, "*Muggsy! Muggsy!*"—calling for some time. "*Muggsy!* Your cue! Your cue, *Muggsy*,—you're late! Where's *Muggsy?*"

Like a rabbit up the iron stairway flew the assistant stage-manager. "*Muggsy! Muggsy!* Oh, Miss Boone!" Now from a distant dressing-room, "Miss Boone! *Muggsy! Muggsy!*"—fainter, fainter, still farther off—"*Muggsy! Muggsy!*"

Back down the iron steps flew the cursing quester. "Where the devil— Miss Boone! Miss Boone!" . . . No, they hadn't seen her. . . . "I haven't seen her, either!" . . . Yes, he *had* seen her. but— And of course, occupied, as usual, with those discouraged, elderly letters in the mail-box, or just getting a drink of water, or dozing, the stage doorkeeper wasn't expected to have seen her.

BUT when, with all its puffs and poses, that historic, that sacred rôle of *Muggsy the Dope* was so meticulously, so mechanically aped by that super-theatrical jack-of-all-trades known as the Stage-Manager (a precious species of entertainment denied, alas, even to the most inveterate first-nighter), it was proved beyond a peradventure that the Original *Muggsy* was no longer in the theater.

At five-thirty that afternoon, when Vanne Burke, pallid and excited, stumbled out of the stage-door into the junk-lined theater passage, she rose to her innate genius. In the next few days, no professional news-noser on the scent of a metropolitan scandal could ever have

made the Broadway theatrical agencies twitter and buzz as did that gypsy little black-haired reporter. But her star auditor was found, one evening, in a little Italian restaurant. Weary, and just back from an irksome try-out "on the dog," and deeply absorbed in her own New York première to-night, Kitty Clover, leaning over the table, gradually awakened to Vanne's amazing revelation:

"Ran out, Kit! Ran right out from that rehearsal! Jumped into a taxi, chased 'way up there, and walked right into his house. She said Fritz was simply stunned. Why, she told me, Kit, he was just walking up and down—awful! Half crazy. Those poor kids of his weren't even dressed. She chased out some fool neighbors there who were only bothering him, and took right hold. Washed up a whole lot of dirty dishes, sent off a bunch of telegrams—and then saw him through the whole darn funeral, all the way to—"

Vanne stopped. She regarded Kitty curiously. "Why, what's the matter, Kit? Oh, of course I know it was a crazy thing for her to do—theatrical suicide, practically; she'll have a jolly hard time ever getting another engagement in this town—but then—why, don't take it so seriously, Kit!"

Kitty Clover spoke: "Has anything happened to—to that part—of *Muggsy*?"

"Nothing," said Vanne, "except that there's a new girl rehearsing the part already." And as she went right on eating, saying that yes, she supposed Kitty *was* shocked because she was always trying to make a great something out of El, when after all El was only El, just a bully good lovable girl with a heart as big as a hassock—Kitty Clover still sat rigid, frigid, her eyes still fixed on a tipped-over salt-cellar on the rusty table-cloth.

THE waiter removed the cold soup.

"Oh, well," said Kitty, at last crumbling off a piece of bread, "it only shows you that every one has to work out his own salvation, I suppose. No matter how much you try to do for people, I've found that sooner or later they usually go back to what they really are. 'Such as we are made of, such we be!' "

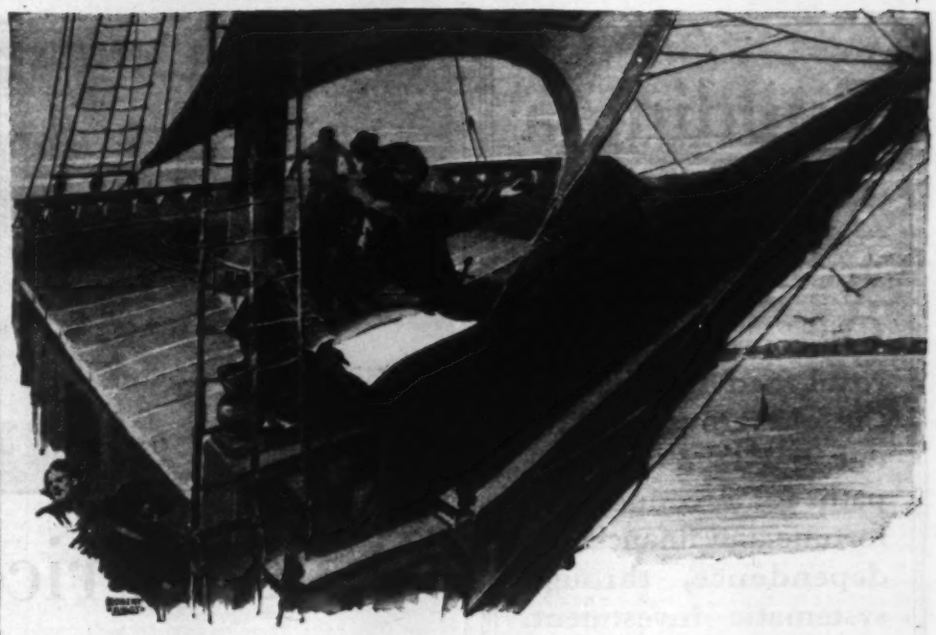
Vanne Burke, twisting more and more of the never-ending spaghetti round her bent fork, looked up almost angrily.

"Say, I don't quite get you to-night, Kit. But, anyway, if El Boone's gone back to what she really is, she's gone back to something pretty darned nice. You ought to know that, Kit, if any one does! And before you bawl El out you don't want to forget, Kitto, that when you first struck this little old burg you weren't the darned successful actress you are to-night. You were a stranger, you know, Kit—and she took you in—and, while I wouldn't exactly want to say that you were naked—yet she—"

"It was just because I *didn't* forget, Miss Burke," icily intervened Kitty Clover, "that I did for El what I would never have dared to do for myself." From her bag, unhurriedly, she drew out a slip of yellow paper. "You see, you don't *always* get the news, Miss Burke!"

Miss Burke read: "'*Eleanore dying express lightning*'—" Frightened, she looked up. "Why, what's this, Kit?"

[*Continued on page 123*]



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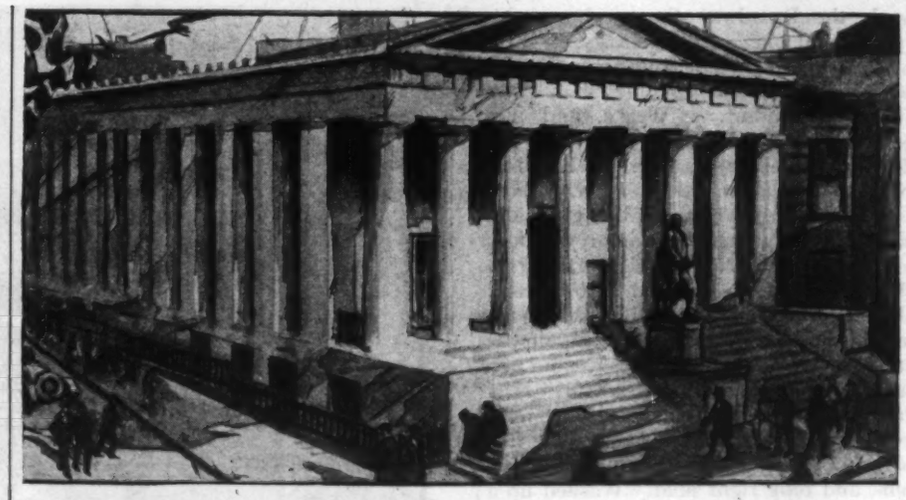

When Prices Decline

By Paul Tomlinson

THERE is virtually no one who does not know, either from his own experience or from observation, that security prices are subject to fluctuations. We hear of So-and-So who made a fortune in the stock market: all he did was to buy a certain stock at a certain price, wait until it went up, and then sell. How easy! Sometimes—not so often—we hear of people who lost a lot of money: all they did was to buy certain stocks at certain prices, wait for them to go up, but found that like the man in the old song they "went the other way."

A man with a profit should find it comparatively easy to decide upon his course of action. There is a well worn saw to the effect that no one ever goes broke taking a profit, and when a man finds that a stock investment shows a substantial profit he can not go far wrong if he realizes on it. When a stock declines, the problem is more difficult of solution. In the first place, people hate to lose money on investments, because, apart from the monetary consideration, they seem to think an unfortunate investment is a reflection upon their business acumen and intelligence. Sometimes it is. On the other hand, there are few persons with any considerable experience in investing who have not at some time—or times—been face to face with a loss.

Usually it is a difficult thing for a man to bring himself to the point of taking a loss. When he sees the quotations for his stock declining day by day, he keeps telling himself that it is a temporary reaction only and that prices will soon begin to climb again. But if the decline continues, and to sell involves a greater sacrifice with every day that he puts it off, his situation is scarcely improved. He wishes he had sold when the decline first started, then he wishes he had sold a month ago, then a week; instead of hoping to get what he originally paid, he thinks of some lower figure, but always of one higher than the present one. Still, the psychological reasons that caused him to hesitate originally hold him back now.

Frequently he gets into such a state of mind that he is incapable of making a decision, and his judgment leaves him entirely. Such a man is liable to take a notion to sell upon a sudden impulse, usually for the bottom price. Many a man, absolutely unaffected by a decline of a few points, loses his head completely when the drop becomes more pronounced, and, without any clear idea of what he is doing or why he is doing it, sacrifices his holdings for whatever he can get for them.

"Buying Speculations"

SOME one may object that the person who buys stocks that are subject to sharp declines is buying speculations and deserves to lose. Of course, it is true that the more speculative a stock the more prone it is to violent fluctuations in price and the worse the strain is on the owner's heart. Theoretically the price of a stock should have little effect, one way or the other; an investor—again theoretically—buys for income, and what he is interested in are safety of principal and assurance of income; the selling price of his investment is a secondary consideration. Unfortunately, it does happen that securities chosen with the utmost care, with strictest regard to their investment qualities, and with every speculative element eliminated, as far as is possible, are liable to be affected adversely by changed conditions and decline in price. What to do in such a situation depends upon a variety of circumstances.

If the decline is due to conditions that in no way affect the value of the investment in question, there is little cause for worry. Ignore the drop in price and hold on, if you are convinced of the soundness of the security you own. Indeed, it may even be possible to buy more of the same thing at a lower price and thus to average down the cost of the investment.

For example: if a man owns ten shares of stock purchased at a price of one hundred dollars a share, and the quotation falls to eighty dollars, he can buy ten shares more and have twenty shares at an average cost of ninety. If prices rise again and the stock is once more quoted at one hundred,

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he can sell and make a profit of ten points on twenty shares—two hundred dollars.

This business of averaging down, however, is the device of the speculator rather than of the investor. The speculator is interested in prices and profits based upon prices; safety and dividend-paying qualities are secondary considerations with him: while to the true investor they are really the only things that count. And averaging down on the wrong stock or bond may prove costly, for the purchaser's holdings are always increased by this practice, and in case the price continues down instead of up the loss incurred is also increased. There is no profit in sending good money after bad.

When a stock goes down there is always a reason for it. If possible, discover the reason. And in purchasing stock consider it from the standpoint of its price at the time. If you own some shares bought at 100, the price declines to 70, and you are thinking of buying more, forget the fact that you previously paid 100 for it. The question to be decided is whether it is a good investment at 70; if your judgment tells you it is not, leave it alone and sell the stock you own, even if it does mean a loss of thirty dollars a share.

When prices decline it is sometimes possible to exchange one security for another with happy results. An account recently appeared in the press of how a large insurance company accomplished this successfully: "In May, 1918, $100,000 Central Railroad of New Jersey 5s of 1987 were exchanged at 100 for $101,000 Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, Iowa Division 4s of October 1919, a 5 per cent basis. In 1920 the former issue sold as low as 87¼ on the stock exchange." Perhaps when the Burlington bonds were paid off they went back into the C. R. R. 5s, which, as this is being written, are quoted at over 106. But it takes an intimate knowledge of investments to accomplish successful exchanges. Many people submit their lists of investment holdings to their bankers every year or so in order to obtain suggestions about exchanges.

High money rates always tend to depress security prices, and at such times declines are not necessarily a reflection upon the worth or safety of any given investment. High rates for money are usually temporary in character, and declines traceable to this cause can therefore be considered as temporary too, and need cause no particular concern. At such times it may even be profitable to average down.

The main thing to do when prices decline is to keep cool. Granted that this is done, there are three alternatives. First of all—nothing. Nothing is the thing to do when the intrinsic value of the investment is unimpaired and the decline is of small proportions. Second, it may be possible to take advantage of a decline, increase the extent of your holdings, and reduce their average cost. This is in case the decline is caused by technical considerations, such as the condition of the money market. Third, sell. If the decision is to sell, do it as quickly as possible. What to do and when to do it is often difficult of solution; in a rising market the problems presented are few, but when prices decline the proper course of action calls for expert advice.

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Q. The Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railway First and Refunding Mortgage 4 per cent Gold Bonds due April 1, 1934, have been recommended to me as a desirable investment. Will you give me some information about this issue and tell me what the yield is at the present time?

A. These bonds are secured by a direct mortgage or collateral lien on about 5,840 miles of road. They are a first mortgage on 1,171 miles, either directly or indirectly through pledge of certain capital issues. They are also secured by a first lien on terminal property at St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Kansas City, Missouri, and on equipment and shop property near East Moline, Illinois. On the total mileage these bonds are outstanding in the hands of the public at the rate of $16,257 per mile, and including prior liens they are outstanding at the rate of $28,762 per mile.

During five years ended December 31, 1921, the company's gross income available for payment of interest charges averaged more than 1½ times the amount required. Dividends have been paid regularly on the outstanding 7 per cent and 6 per cent preferred stock since 1916. They are listed on the New York Stock Exchange. At present prices the yield is slightly more than 6 per cent.

Q. Please give me a list of six high-grade preferred stocks. I have $7,000 to invest and wish to put it into a half dozen different issues, approximately an equal amount in each.

A. The following, in our opinion, meet your requirements:

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Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe
National Biscuit Company
National Lead Company
Union Pacific
United States Steel

Q. I should appreciate it if you would give me the names of some books dealing with investing, particularly those relating to bonds.

A. "Principles of Bond Investment," by Laurence Chamberlain, published by Henry Holt & Company; "Elements of Bond Investment," by A. M. Sakolski, published by the Ronald Press; "Investments," by David F. Jordan, published by Prentice-Hall; and "Putnam's Investment Handbook," by Albert W. Atwood, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, are four books that should meet the requirements of a person wishing to obtain a general knowledge of investments.

Q. What is the capital stock of the Continental and Commercial Trust Company of Chicago, the surplus, and annual dividend rate?

A. There are $25,000,000 of capital stock, $19,368,000 of surplus, and the annual dividend rate is 12 per cent.

Q. What were the high prices for Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul common and preferred stocks in 1922? Is the preferred cumulative?

A. 36⅜ was the high price for St. Paul common and 55 for the preferred. The preferred stock is non-cumulative; it has preference in dividends up to 7 per cent, and after 7 per cent is paid on the common both share pro rata. No dividends have been paid since September, 1917.

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Eleanore the Second-Hand

[*Continued from page 119*]

"Just a cablegram I sent to Blanche Dare. Read on."

"'*Eleanore dying express lightning revival Red Lights cannot relieve fatal no hope but you friendship lose no time implore use all your influence with Bunner to get Eleanore part of Muggsy.*' You—you cabled *this?*" gasped Vanne.

"Yes, and got some of El's rich friends to sign it."

Vanne studied her. "But—but it's such nonsense, Kit!"

"I didn't want it too clear," said Kitty Clover, rising elegantly and drawing on her mousquetaires; "it was altogether too important." And as she passed Vanne with a playful tweak of her ear, "What you need for theatrical people, Miss Burke, is—temperament!"

Left alone, Miss Burke slowly, very slowly, stirred her coffee.

"Oh, well—Kit's all right enough, I suppose—knows so darned much— But, darn it, she always seems to be right—*wrong*. . . . And of course—yes, poor old El usually *is* wrong—" stirring, stirring—"but God bless that girl, if she doesn't always manage, somehow, to be wrong—*right!*"

III

THE rest of this yarn should unravel quickly, easily. Surely,

"In the gloaming, O my darling,
When the lights are dim and low,"

where, in a certain fulgent paradise of *nouveau richeness*, sit two old friends of ours—well, you would hardly expect the strands to tangle very seriously, would you? Especially when she sings:

"Will you think of me, and love me
As you did, long, long ago?"

Languidly over the keys of Dare's grand piano, her tall fingers, drifting. Languidly, luxuriously, in that gold-and-rose Louis Quatorze fauteuil, a long, lank leg was crossed.

"Now, where was I?" asked Mr. J. Fritz Perkins.

"You were at the old Red Opera House," yawned Eleanore Boone, and her voice swelled louder, louder:

"It was best to leave you there, dear—
Best for you, and best for me!"

"Oh, yes! 'Why, Perkins,' he used to tell me, 'the way you handle that stage, boy, is certainly something to take away with you!' . . . Great man, Worr. . . . Genius." A grizzling head nestling deep down into the shirrs of a fat silken cushion. And beside a contented, gumdrop-chewing gentleman, softened rays from a stained-glass lamp essayed their rose-tinted best to ameliorate the lines of a face carved and scarred by theatrical disappointments. "Yes, sir, Eleanore, one of the cleverest *Ghosts* he'd ever seen."

Eleanore nodded, and stumbled along. But not long was it before that uncertain melody had come to an unexpected stop. From out of a huge cloud of Corona, Corona smoke she heard:

"Eleanore, there's something been troubling me for some time."

Her garrulous guest, after strolling up and down the Royal Kazan, rolling appraising eyes from Spanish leather and

ELBERT HUBBARD

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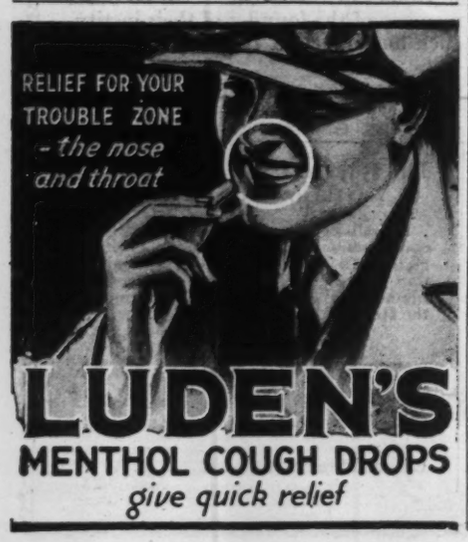

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crotch-veneered mahogany to alabaster-columned Carrara cupids, was now leaning down upon the piano. "I haven't wanted to speak of it before—it may be a sore subject with you, perhaps—but, Eleanore, I'd like to know just exactly what happened about *Muggsy*."

There! At last—it had come. Like the Siamese twins, there was, you know, between those fabulous creatures, the *Ghost* and *Muggsy*, a mysterious, sympathetic bond. Hardly ever had one made its appearance without dragging in the other. But no! No, sir! Eleanore had vowed to herself that never, *never* would she tell Fritz Perkins how she had sacrificed that part for him.

ON the chaise-longue she was now. She was picking away at a little lace butterfly on her handkerchief. And as, rather clumsily, Fritz was trying to tell her that if it hadn't been for that darned row they had, you know, that time, and the wife being so sick just then, and all—and if he'd only a-known, how he would have broke his neck to have got *Muggsy* for her—Eleanore rose, and wandered off toward the window.

". . . You know that, Eleanore, don't you? But I was so doggone rushed and damn worried and everything, I didn't know half what was going on. I heard you got it, and I heard you didn't. I heard all sorts of things." Fritz waited. "Why, you—you certainly must have tried for it." He squinted at her, and breathed hard.

"Why—why-uh—"

"Well, what?"

"Why, yes, Fritz, I—I did try for it."

"D'you mean to say they wouldn't give it to you?"

Silence. "Well, what happened?"

"Why, no—no, I—I didn't get it, Fritz."

"You didn't get it! *You?* What, you, the Original *Muggsy?*"

This was too much for Eleanore; and, before she knew it, it had slipped right out: "Why—oh, yes—yes, Fritz, I did get it. I—that is—yes, I got *Muggsy*, Fritz."

"You got it! You say you got it? Well, for the love of Limburger, why ain't you playing it now, then?" Old Timothy Worr would have been delighted at the way he held his glare on her.

Eleanore now stood looking down on Broadway. Frowningly, Mr. Perkins settled back in his golden chair. "Well, I don't see what you been lying about it for, Eleanore." Glaring at her. "D'you mean to say—why—why, you *must* have made good—in *Muggsy!*"

Incredulously watching her long, uneasy fingers pleat and repleat the lace curtain, "Well," he muttered, "there's something mighty funny about it all somewhere." And as his impatience rose, his voice rose with it. "What's all the dark secret about it for, anyway? Can't you speak?"

Languidly Eleanore sought again her old refuge, the chaise-longue. She blew her nose. Oh, well, she'd just have to tell him—something, anyway. "Why, you see, Fritz, Bunner—well, you know, Bunner, he—"

"Yes, I know Saxe Bunner, all right! And, by gum, if— See here," he cried, pounding the table, "you been a mighty good friend to me, Eleanore Boone. Why,

when I think of the way you've been coming up to my house there—the way you been a-mothering them kids ever since—" Tears came into Mr. Perkins's eyes. "Well, I—I don't forget, that's all! I—I don't forget. And now, if there's been any—any funny business or anything with Bunner, or—"

"Oh, no! No, no, Fritz! Why, sit down—sit— Why, it was only that I—well, I was ill, you know, and-uh—well, I mean I had to leave the rehearsal rather suddenly, you know, one day, and-uh—" And as she watched Mr. Perkins settle down in his chair, something there was in his face that seemed to make it difficult to go on with, "Well, when I came back, why-uh—why, Bunner wouldn't take me back in the part, you know, and-uh—"

"What, *you?* Such a great friend of Dare's?" Slowly, very slowly, he relighted his cigar. "How long were you away?"

"Oh, I don't know—I—"

"You don't *know?*"

"Why, you see, Fritz— Oh, dear! Well, here's the honest truth about it—"

"Truth! Stars of grief, Eleanore, what in the name of Nebuchadnezzar—" and the spark of suspicion which had been glowing in those greenish eyes suddenly flared into a blaze. Hammer-like, his fist flew up—down. The Carrara cupid trembled. "Jump-ing cats of Jericho! You don't mean to tell me, Eleanore Boone, that you've gone and done it *again?* You haven't let anybody bamboozle you out of *that* part! Not *Muggsy!*"

"Oh, but, Fritz! Let me just tell you—when a real friend is suffering—"

"There you are! I knew it! I knew it!" nightingaled Fritz Perkins. Fritz was on his feet. It was like old times in the office. "Suffering!" he sneered. "Always somebody suffering! And of course—"

"Oh, but you don't understand, Fritz! I had to go! I—"

"Yes, of course, Eleanore Damfool Boone has to give up her whole stage career for some whining skunk that—"

"Oh! Oh, Fritz!"

A SUDDEN turn, and he was back to her. He tapped his lady fiercely on the knee. "Haven't I told you, Eleanore Boone, that this stage game is a cutthroat proposition?"

"Yes, yes, I know, Fritz, but listen! I—"

"Haven't I told you time and time again to look out for yourself?"

"Oh, Fritz, do let me tell you—"

His voice took on a high Caruso note: "Haven't I told you to let other people get out of their own troubles themselves? What if some old Jane *was* sick! What if she was dying! Hell," he shouted, "what if she was—"

But a hand—it had shot out—up against his lips it was now, tight, tight. "Fritz! Fritz, don't get so excited. Why, I'm trying to tell you, dear, that it was you. You! *You,* Fritz! Don't you understand? It was you I went to—*you!*"

And in that lovely-lighted room—which seemed suddenly to have been plunged into utter darkness—muffled, hoarse, sepulchral, as if from some black abyss, a voice coming up, out—"What? What you say?"

"Oh, I had to, Fritz! You were all alone up there, you know—you and those—those little—"

Hawaii—Six Days from California

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"What? What you say?"

"No one to—to—"

"What? What you—"

"Oh, no one to take care of them, Fritz—why, I—what could I do?—I just had to go!"

And Fritz Perkins froze into silence. . . .

NOW, I ask you: wouldn't you think, after having so obtusely forced the disclosure of her heart's secret like that—that he'd go up to her? Wouldn't you think he'd say something?—touch her hair?—something—or *something?* But no. Never yet has the good Lord made a mistake in any spot of any of His leopards.

And, quite as true to her own divine pattern, Eleanore stood, by that window she stood, thinking that perhaps she ought to go on over to him and tell him that it really wasn't anything, after all, and that, why, she could always get another part: when, into her agonized, embarrassed meditation, *Bang!* the door of the salon slammed. Then, down the hallway, *Slam!* went another door. And before Eleanore, trembling, shock-dazed, could realize what had happened—excitedly the door of the salon had reopened.

"Oh, Miss Boone! Miss Boone! What's the matter, Miss Boone? Oh, I just come in from the movies, an' he almost run right into me there in the hall—"

"Oh, don't talk to me, Emma! Go on out! Go—"

"Oh, he looked somethin' terrible, he did, that man, Miss Boone! Why, he never put on his overcoat nor nothin'! Miss Boone, he was cryin'!"

"Oh, my God, my God—get out of this room, I tell you!"

"Ain't that just like Miss Dare, though! Aw, this old theatrical business! Nothin' but—"

But Eleanore had already reached the door. And as she wavered back to the chaise-longue, down the hallway, the muffled diminuendo:

"Nothin' but tears, tears, tears!"

BUT, after all, doesn't it usually take rain to bring forth the flowers? Why, less than twenty-four hours it was before those flowers came! And never, never—no, not even in the days of Saxe Bunner's most ardent and expensive love—had Blanche Dare's great yellow Cloisonné vase overflowed with such a propitiatory tribute of towering red, red roses as it did this wonderful night—oh, this Night of Nights!

And as, that night, Milady Boone's magnifical but not-too-white white satin trailed across the Royal Kazan, lo, there appeared unto her one who found favor in her sight. With an approving eye she marked the pert, pin-striped pantaloons, whereof each leg revealed a deep, ironic crease. She noted that the impeccable four-inch collar was, this gladsome evening, assisted in throttling him by a festivious shrimp-pink crocheted cravat. Back-brushed was Mr. Perkins's hair; it was forsooth brilliantined. And, battered as was that honest face near to, he might, methinks Jasper Fritz Perkins might, at first sight, have passed for any Broadway juvenile lead.

And if peradventure you scoff at one who wears in his buttonhole a snowy white carnation (however ably supported by a

sprig of maidenhair and a twist of tinfoil), yet verily, verily, I say unto you, Eleanore Boone rejoiced with an exceeding great joy. No wonder her face was transfigured. No wonder her heart was flutter-fluttering. For a voice in Eleanore's memory, a still small voice, was singing, singing, "I haven't worn a posy in my buttonhole since I courted my wife!"

Her visitor swung to anchor on the big tapestry couch. And as the first pale-pink gumdrop started upward on its fatal journey, Mr. Perkins gazed enravished upon a hostess so richly endued. Gazed again, and again, and again.

"New, ain't it?"

"Why, Fritz! This is the marvelous creation Blanche wore in that-uh—that—" But somehow Eleanore didn't quite like to say it.

"Oh, yes! Yes, I recall now—the great wedding scene." Somehow, Fritz seemed to like to say it. "Wedding—wedding, eh? Oh, yes, that wedding dress made more of a hit than Dare did herself!" And as, scornfully, his eyes rolled up at the huge dead nudes, coffined in gorgeous gilded frames, "Ain't it wonderful, Eleanore, how rich a poor actress can be?"

And it was a regretful voice that recollected how old Timothy Worr had often told him that with all his ability, boy, he ought to own one of the finest homes a-goin'.

Languidly Eleanore lighted a cigarette. "Oh, I don't know, Fritz"; she blew the smoke high in air; "I'm not so keen on these marvelous homes, all full of junk and— What's the matter with your cute little place? You know, Fritz," she puffed dreamily on, "really, you know, I'd rather live where you do, there, than here, any day. More homelike, sort of—more—" She jumped up. Oh! O-o-o-o-o-o-oh! What *had* she said!

NOW, in by-gone days, to meet such embarrassing crises, haply the family photograph album would have been hurried to the rescue. But now that even picture post-cards have been relegated to the garret, there seems to be but one reliable friend—that ornate polished familiar of every household.

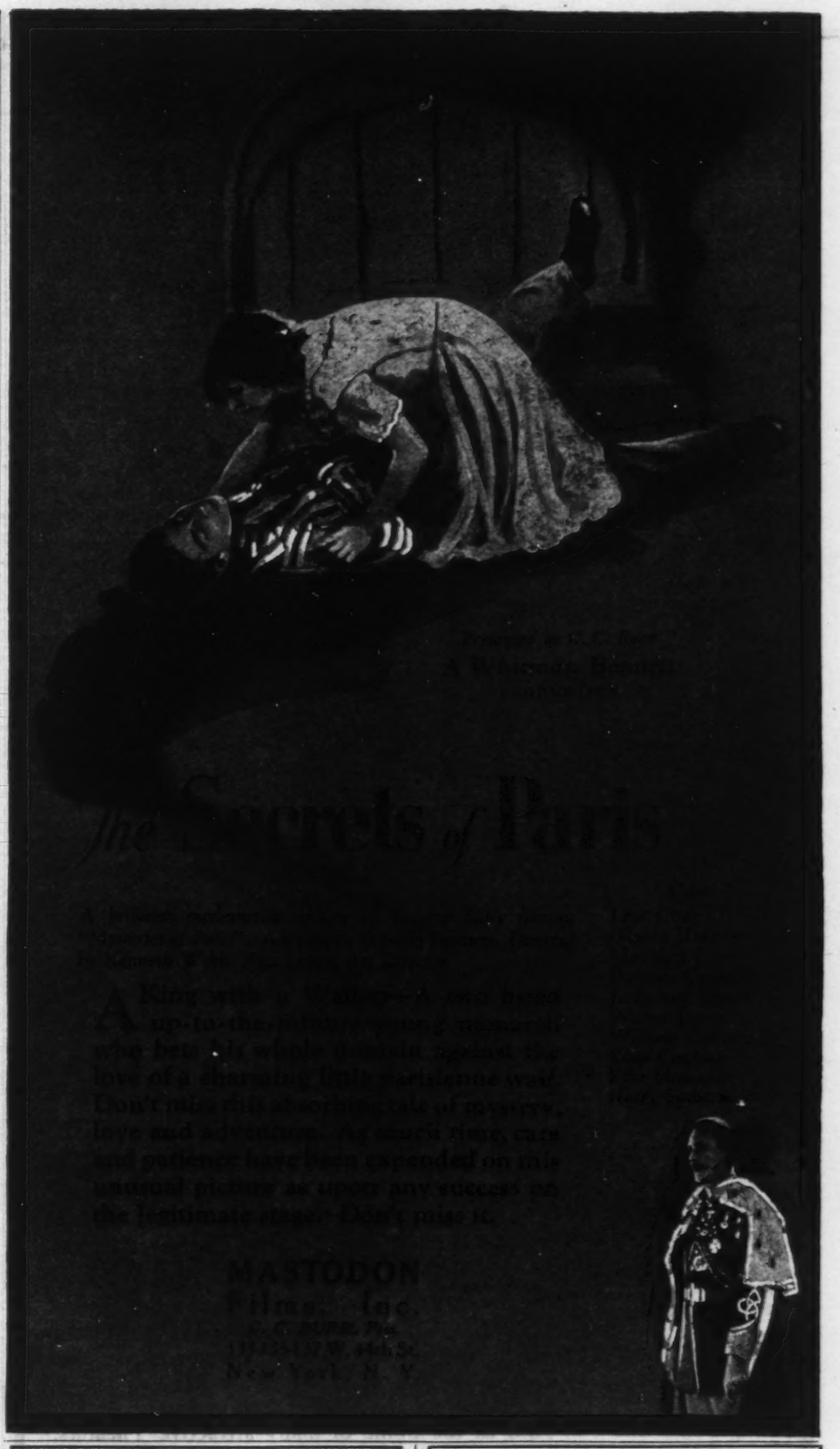
"What you doing, Eleanore? Oh, don't wind that thing up to-night! Aw, come on back here and sit down! I want to talk. I don't want to—"

But already, with angelic abandon, "Hoo-ha! Hoo-ha!" as if joy-drunk on some melodic mountain-peak, eerily, fantastically, bewilderingly, "*Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!*" Tetrazzini, bursting into celestial song, was skylarking heavenly encouragement. "Come on, Fritz! Be brave—be bold! Life is gorgeous, Fritz! Life is love!" And, effervescing in mounting ecstasies of angel squawks and rapturous cat-calls, the divine diva artfully coaxed from that pin-striped knee a long, timid finger, an inky finger, up, up the tall white powdered arm of Miss Eleanore Boone, up, up, and—oh, how that songbird soared!—higher and higher, and—

"Oh, look out there for that curl there, Fritz! It's only wished on, you know."

And so Tetrazzini wove her magic spell. "Oh, no, I don't mind it, Fritz," Eleanore was murmuring; "sort of restful, don't you know—sort of—don't you know—"

How easy, oh, how easy, with the faint-



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est touch of glamour, with the mildest of modern sorcery, to forget—let the world roll on! Ah me, for the want of a mere cigarette, maybe—a ray of moonlight, or the provocative balm of honeysuckles—for the want of a Luisa Tetrazzini—many a fine old girl with big brown eyes is sweater-knitting to-day and studying Tagore. . . . Oh, my dear, my dear! . . .

Seductive, hypnotic, delirious, the seraphic songstress was encircling them in such a love-inspiring flight of melody that the, dream-bound Fritz, his arm now boldly round his lady's really slender waist, could no longer restrain his enthusiasm.

"Great!" he cried, "*great!* Greatest voice I ever heard. Never enjoyed anything so much in all my life!"

Tetrazzini shrieked in sublime laughter: "*Ha-ha! Ha-ha!*" a melody-mad shower of gurgling, crystal mirth. Eleanore laughed, too; but it was a nervous, man-conscious little laugh, as she made X's and G's and big Z's on Fritz's hand.

". . . Why, yes, Fritz, I do get awfully tired, don't you know, of things that aren't really my own. Of course, all the people I've ever lived with have been simply wonderful to me, but still I—" F's and P's and E's.

"Still you what?" Somebody moved closer to somebody else. "Still you—what?"

"Listen, Fritz! Isn't she wonderful? Those 'way-off tones—aren't they haunting, though! Just listen to—"

"Still you *what*, Eleanore?" And this time, in her ear, quickly, "Still you'd rather have a home of your own, dear?"

Whisper . . . whisper. . . . Isn't it extraordinary how two rapt infatuates will sit and whisper . . . whisper . . . when there's not a creature about? Whisper . . . whisper . . .

". . . Oh, yes, Fritz, I can see it's a great responsibility. Of course it's always worse for a child to lose a mother than a father. . . . Oh, I know, Fritz, but at that age they're always perfect little devils—bless 'em, though! Why, I remember how my—my boys, Fritz—I remember—I—"

She didn't go on. She just sat there. . . . Her eyes . . . oh, at twenty she must have been lovely! Some women there are, you know, who derive their whole beauty from the pathetic. . . . And, in the bitter-sweet of that soft stillness—the moment exquisite—Fritz's contrite whisper, "Never should have got onto this subject in the world, Eleanore!"

"Oh, I'm all right." Smiling now. Smiling away his fresh, folded handkerchief, so tenderly seeking her eyes.

"Never should have got onto this sub—"

"Why, Fritz! Fritz Perkins, you old frog you, why, don't you know—why, I never—I never dreamed, Fritz, that I could ever, ever, *ever* be so happy again!"

Silence—a long, sacred silence. . . .

No one that you'd marry, perhaps, J. Fritz Perkins; or that I'd really care to consider. But the little grace-notes that trickle into the music of a soul are not always heard by you and me. Not always. But Eleanore Boone heard them. She was happy. And that's all we care about, isn't it? She was happy.

Just Fritz—Fritz talking—talking anything—was all she knew. All she wanted to know. Fritz—Fritz Perkins . . . . Fritz here one moment—happy, so happy!

The next moment—nothing but a room, an old, empty, devilish room—clocks on mantels; high ceilings; ashes—ashes. In the center of the room she was, now—standing there—awkward. Lost. Why—why, had he really been here to-night? Had he? Her fingers—slowly, through his cigar ashes. . . . Gone! Fritz Perkins had gone. Oh, dear, what was the use of his coming, if he only had to go? Ashes—ashes. . . . Wasn't that sweet, though, the way he said that?—"Why, of course I never hurt that ankle, dear! I *couldn't* have! I just couldn't!" . . . That look in his eyes when he said we'd never had a real quarrel in our lives! . . . Fritz—Fritz Perkins.

Off went a tarnished silver slipper. (To tell the truth, it had not been made for Eleanore; but, till now, she had been quite unconscious of the pain.)

And that night, her head on Dare's lacy pillow, lo, a great peace came to Eleanore Boone. She lay, dreaming—on her lips a smile. Home—be it ever so humble, there's no place like a cute little Home, sweet Harlem Home!

AND now, though Dearie has ceased her roaming "'midst pleasures and palaces," you wouldn't really want to leave her in such a calm, vanilla mood, would you? Her love affair, you know, had always been stormy. And so, before the hat-pins are jammed in and the opera-glasses tucked away in the beaded bag, wouldn't you like to catch a last quick close-up of her little new second-hand home—wouldn't you? There may be a few tears in her eyes, but don't you worry. Let Fritz get excited.

"Aw, if you hadn't gone back to that old 'Red Lights' company—"

"Fritz, if I hadn't gone round behind to that girl's dressing-room after the matinée, I'd never, never have known what I've been all these years!"

"Didn't you tell her you was the Original?"

"But she was the NEW *Muggsy*, Fritz! And there I was, shoved off in a corner. Why, she was alive, I tell you—and I was dead! D'you hear that, Fritz? Dead!" Little hands place a Teddy bear in her lap as she wails: "Oh, yes, I've been a ghost, too, all these years! Haunting them all with my *Muggsy—Muggsy!* Just as you've been—"

She stops, to wipe a little nose. "Fritz Perkins, these are my children now, and I don't intend to have any children of mine brought up on ghost stories!" (Oh, it takes Home, sweet Home to bring out what you really are!) "To-day's the day, Fritz; and I intend to bring them up to live in To-day!"

Ribbony rosebuds dangling, a run in her green silk stocking, she gathers together her little second-hand brood and trails the mellowed elegance of her second-hand raiment up the narrow stairs of her second-hand home. At the top, she looks down upon her second-hand husband. And Eleanore smiles. Eleanore, in all her chop-suey loveliness. Eleanore, the Second-hand.

The *Ghost* in "Hamlet"—still looking up at her—looking—

But then, everybody looked at Eleanore, you know. Everybody. Looked again, and again, and again.

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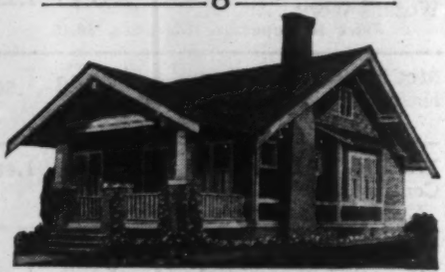

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Poems by Nancy Byrd Turner, Dorothy Peace, Harry Kemp, and Dixie Willson

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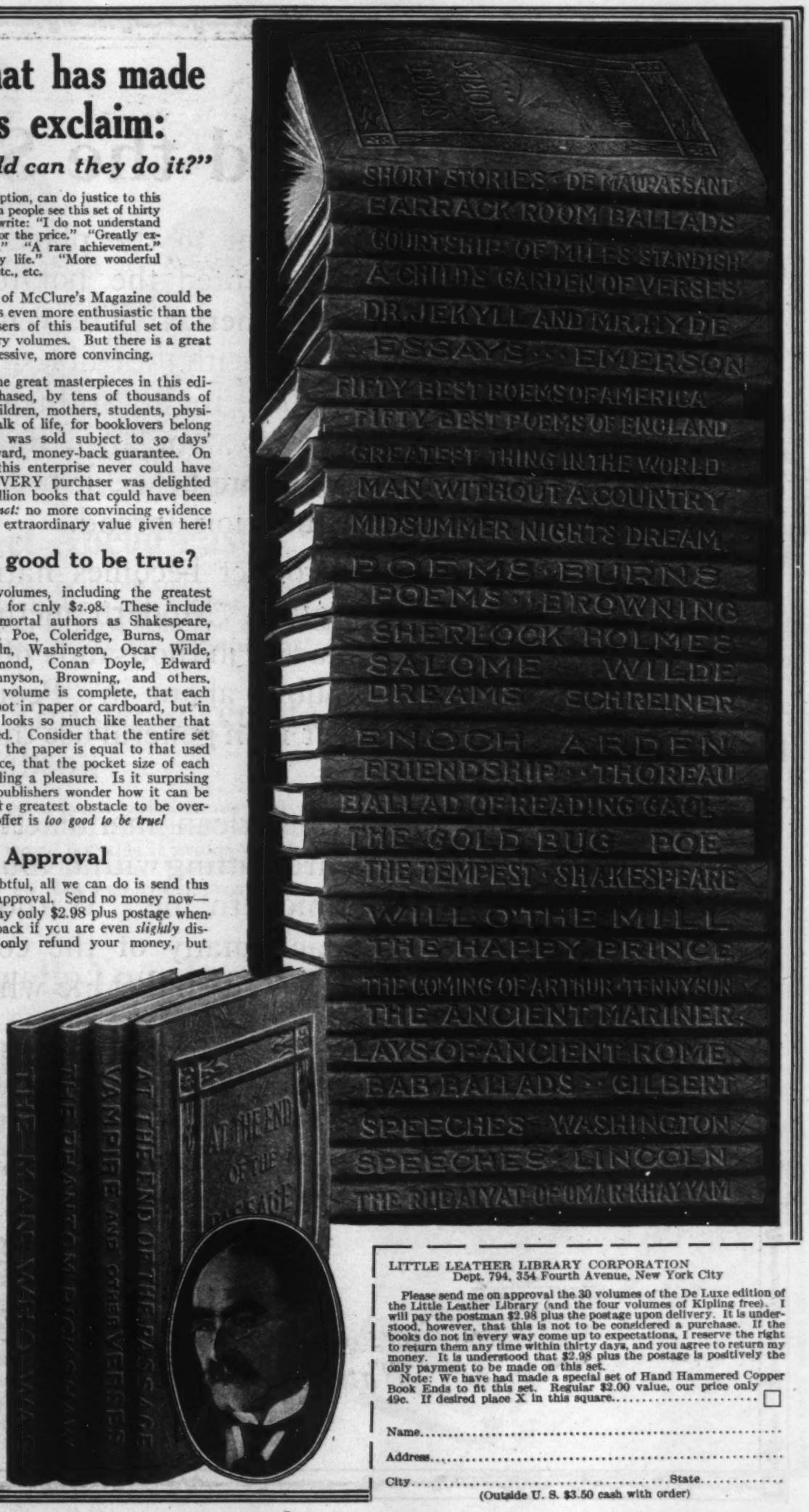

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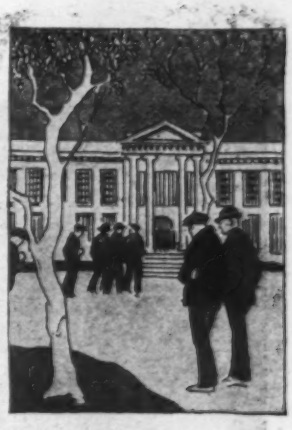

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